

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

Report of the Committee on
FOOTBALL



LONDON
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
1968

The estimated cost of the preparation of this report is £4,695 13s. 1d. of which £1,890 represents the estimated cost of printing and publishing the report.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

"To enquire into the state of Association Football at all levels, including the organisation, management, finance and administration, and the means by which the game may be developed for the public good; and to make recommendations".

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

TO: The Secretary of State for Education and Science.

1. We were appointed in June, 1966, with the following terms of reference:
"To enquire into the state of Association Football at all levels, including the organisation, management, finance and administration, and the means by which the game may be developed for the public good; and to make recommendations".

We held our first meeting on 19th July, 1966.

2. As we understand it our origins go back to representations made by the Football League and subsequently by the Football Association about the deteriorating financial position of the game and the need for money for its improvement and administration. A Levy Board, on lines similar to the Horse-race Betting Levy Board, was suggested as a means of raising money. In December, 1964, a Sports Facilities Bill was introduced by Mr. Harry Howarth, M.P., and supported by Members from all parties. On 9th February, 1965, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education and Science made a statement in the House explaining why the Government could not accept the principle of the Bill but that they were of the opinion that a comprehensive enquiry was merited. As a result the Bill was withdrawn. We understand that the Parliamentary Under-Secretary then had discussions with representatives of the three national Football Associations and the English and Scottish Football Leagues.

3. Though we are reporting to the Government, most of our recommendations are addressed not to the Government but to the various bodies responsible in England, Scotland and Wales for the government of the game. The establishment of the Enquiry was welcomed by these bodies and we have had the fullest help and co-operation from them. We trust that they, who already do so much for the well-being of the game, will not think that their help and support have been wasted or misplaced, and that our analysis of the problems and our recommendations will, on mature reflection, prove acceptable. The future of the game lies in their hands. Our report is designed to help them better carry out their various responsibilities. At several points we have found it necessary to be critical, but our main aim always has been to allow our recommendations to flow from an analysis of the facts and from the evidence we have received. Our purpose has been to be as constructive and as helpful as possible.

4. In addition to receiving a mass of written evidence we have taken oral evidence from the many national bodies concerned with the running of the game and from other bodies and individuals whose views could be of value. We have held 36 meetings. We held meetings in Glasgow and Cardiff in order to have discussions with the various Scottish and Welsh Associations. We visited a number of League clubs, either officially as a committee or as individuals, and by meeting those engaged in the game on these and other occasions we tried to

increase our understanding of its problems. We also arranged for certain studies to be made. Thanks to the willingness of all the English League clubs and most of the Scottish League clubs to provide us with the information, we have been able to make a detailed analysis of the finances of the two Leagues over a three year period. The analysis was made for us by Mr. Charles Spain and Mr. Peter Segal and we are very indebted to them for their help. We also made a survey, based on available sources, of the facilities for the playing of amateur football in England and our thanks are due to Mr. A. J. Davies for undertaking this. Two of our members were, by the courtesy of Sir Stanley Rous, able to take advantage of the meeting of F.I.F.A. in Munich in May, 1967, to meet leading members of various national associations and so learn about the organisation and problems of football in other countries.

5. The organisations and individuals who gave written and/or oral evidence at the Committee's request are listed in Appendix I. We should like to record our thanks to them, to the members of the public who wrote to us, to the various government departments who provided us with information and to the many other bodies and persons who co-operated with and helped us. Our special thanks are due to Mr. Alan Hardaker, Secretary of the Football League, from whom we always received the fullest co-operation and assistance and to the officers of the three national associations. We have to thank our Secretary, Miss H. E. Clinkard, and her assistant Mr. L. H. Woodman, for the efficient arrangement of our meetings.

6. The plan of the report is as follows. We first survey the state of the amateur game, including schoolboy and youth football. We then turn to the present position of the English and Scottish Football Leagues, as being the topmost levels of the professional game, and the standard by which British football is judged in the highly competitive international world. Next we consider the players, referees and those who govern the game—whether amateur or professional. Finally, we bring together the financial needs revealed by the analyses in the second, third and sixth chapters and consider how best they can be met.

7. We have been concerned with England, Scotland and Wales, but not with Northern Ireland. Most features of the game are very much the same in each country and therefore in most of the report we are able to talk about football as a whole without mentioning any particular country. Inevitably, however, in view of its much greater size and complexity we have had to give more space to English football. Where the rules and customs are different in the three countries we have dealt with each country separately.

8. Before listing our recommendations and dealing with certain main themes which run through our report, we must make four general points.

GENERAL STATE OF THE GAME

9. Our enquiries and the evidence submitted to us show clearly that viewed as a whole the game has never been more flourishing. The number of clubs in membership of the County Associations in England has risen from 17,973 in 1948 to 25,217 in 1964, and to 30,862 in 1967. The game is played in some 12,000 schools in England. Both Scotland and Wales, although having special problems, also report increased interest and activity. During any week in the season between $\frac{3}{4}$ million and a million boys, youths and men are playing in football matches, and more than a million people are watching. A major game

shown on television is likely to attract 7-10 million viewers. Wembley can no longer hold anything like the number who wish to see the F.A. Cup Final. Football is the national sport and a great source of entertainment. Viewed internationally our teams, national or local, can more than hold their own with those of other countries. The game is played with more skill and enthusiasm than at any other time.

10. We found one recent feature of the game very disturbing. The number of cases of misconduct by players on the field has doubled in the last five or six years. The increase is not confined to the very tense and competitive League games between highly paid professional players. It has occurred throughout the game in Britain even in the small local amateur leagues. In part no doubt the increase reflects social changes—the permissive society, the freer use of bad language, the unwillingness to accept authority. If this is so then misconduct in football will not greatly improve until there is an improvement in the manners and attitudes of society as a whole. This cannot, however, excuse players and clubs from not making a special effort to rid the game of unsporting conduct. The referees are but the agency which enforce the code which it must be assumed all clubs and players accept. It is in the interests of everybody engaged in the game that players should exercise much greater self-discipline and that clubs should cease to field players who are undisciplined. Otherwise those who dislike bad behaviour will increasingly turn away from either playing or watching the game.

11. It is not a matter of pulling down and rebuilding but of improving and developing. Moreover, the game still has a considerable undeveloped potential as a sport and as an entertainment, but only if it can adjust itself to the changing social patterns.

RECENT AND FUTURE TRENDS

12. Certain recent general social and economic trends have already greatly affected the organisation and finance of the game at all levels and are likely to continue to do so:—

- (i) The decline in the length of the normal working week and, in particular, the change-over to a five day week.
- (ii) The general rise in incomes, providing an increasing margin for expenditure on various forms of entertainment.
- (iii) The greater mobility of everybody—whether by car, motor-cycle or scooter.
- (iv) The shifting pattern of population and industry; the spread of the suburbs, the spread of industry outside the major towns and the growth of new centres of population.
- (v) The increasing difficulty of relying on voluntary work for the running of clubs, leagues and associations.
- (vi) The rising standard of education, including a higher school-leaving age, much greater numbers attending universities and technical colleges, and a generally greater emphasis on training.
- (vii) The development of radio and television, particularly of the latter.
- (viii) Increasing scarcity and rising cost of land.

13. We have been concerned not only with recent trends. It is essential to look ahead, to prepare for the circumstances of the 1970's and not to be tidying up the aftermath of the 1950's. Inevitably much of the report is concerned with current problems but we have tried to be forward looking and some of the changes we recommend are in anticipation of likely future trends or are designed to put the game in a better position to meet problems likely to arise. The trends just indicated will, we think, continue to exercise a considerable influence for very many years to come.

THE UNITY OF THE GAME

14. We have been impressed by the unity of the game. It is tempting, particularly in the comfort of the Directors' box, to concentrate wholly on the clubs and players with international reputations and forget the muddy boys without facilities to wash and change after a match. But without school football and the small village clubs the Football League clubs could not have reached their present standards or eminence. The well-known and prosperous professional and amateur clubs could not flourish if the rest of the game were to deteriorate or to get into difficulties. One fortunate feature of the game in England, Scotland and Wales, compared with most other countries, is the high standard achieved not only by a few national clubs but at all levels of the game. The same Laws of the Game govern its playing at all levels, the successful referees and linesmen start by officiating in the humblest of local leagues, and the rules of the national associations treat small and big clubs alike.

GENERAL AIMS

15. We, as a committee, are interested in promoting and improving the game as a whole:

- (i) as a sport—to be played for healthy exercise and enjoyment and with a team spirit;
- (ii) as a major public entertainment—to be watched in good conditions and paid for by the spectators;
- (iii) as a form of voluntary service and an outlet for constructive energies.

16. We do not propose to deal with all our recommendations. They are listed at the end of this chapter. There are, however, three themes which recur and on which a general word may be helpful. They concern the status of players, the organisation and government of the game and finance.

THE STATUS OF PLAYERS

17. Though also very attractive to spectators, football is primarily a sport to be played for healthy exercise and enjoyment. To be a good player demands a high degree of fitness and skill, determination and a capacity to be a co-operative member of a team. It is the most highly organised and the most competitive sport in Britain. These statements are true of both the amateur and the professional game. Unfortunately, for reasons we need not go into here, the professional player suffers certain disadvantages which arise only in part from the fact that he is paid for playing the game. Mainly they are a relic of the time when sport was strictly amateur and to be paid implied a lower social status. Thus, though an amateur or a former amateur footballer can take part in the management of his club and in the running of his league or association, a

professional or former professional player in all three countries is subject to certain limitations and disabilities. Moreover, in England a former registered professional can only play as an amateur with the permission of the Football Association. We see no reason for continuing this discrimination, hence our recommendations 27, 30 and 32.

18. At one time the term amateur denoted a player who met the whole of the cost of playing out of his own pocket. The great bulk of those who play the game nowadays are still of that kind. But it is now more common for a player to be reimbursed for his out-of-pocket expenses. Increasing competitiveness in the upper reaches of the amateur game in England, combined with an ability of many clubs at that level to attract substantial gate receipts, has produced the sham amateur, i.e. a man who goes beyond receiving his expenses and makes a profit out of playing the game, yet is nevertheless treated as an amateur. It is difficult to obtain concrete evidence of the practice, for it is against the Rules of the Football Association and any club or player found breaking the Rule would be liable to heavy punishment. We discuss the whole question of amateur status in paragraphs 239–250. We believe that most leagues and competitions should continue to be confined to clubs that are clearly of amateur status. At the same time we have recommended that instead of making occasional efforts to enforce Rule 25 or ignoring its infringement the Association should base its policy on the assumption that sham amateurism exists and is likely to grow. To help meet the problem we have proposed that some of the present amateur leagues under the jurisdiction of the Association should be made open to both amateurs and professionals and that a new status of “semi-professional” be introduced.

19. All clubs depend for their success on the abilities of their players. League clubs, therefore, want to keep their professional players if they are good and get rid of them as quickly as possible if they are bad. If for one reason or another a club wishes to or is willing to part with a good player, it likes to be able to treat him as an asset which will bring in a reasonable transfer fee. In addition, of course, a team is something more than eleven individual players and a club needs to keep a balanced group of players together. Hence the transfer and retention system. We analyse this at some length in paragraphs 260–302. In the end we are driven to the conclusion that though the present system, combined with the independent appeal procedure, is much fairer than it was before the changes introduced in 1963, it still suffers from a major defect: it is still based on the principle of a one-way option in favour of the club. The contract is renewable at the option of the club, normally every one or two years, and does not come to an end until the club decides it should or the Tribunal supports the player in his appeal against retention. We have recommended that every contract should be for a definite period at the end of which either club or player should be free to renew and have suggested that during the course of the next five years both Leagues should change over to this system.

20. We consider the one-way option to be particularly bad when incorporated in the Associated Schoolboy scheme. If the club with whom the boy has signed wishes to retain him he cannot, when he leaves school, sign as Apprentice for another club. And as the Apprentice scheme contains a similar one-way option he must, if he wishes to be a professional player, sign for that same club. Thus, though introduced primarily to safeguard the interests of boys still at school,

the contractual basis of the scheme can tie a boy aged 13, 14 or 15 to a League club until the club cares to release him. We have recommended that the contract in the Schoolboy and the Apprenticeship schemes should be for a defined period at the end of which both parties shall be free.

21. These recommendations concerning the contractual relations between the professional player and his club are among the most controversial in the report. We are aware that they strengthen the position of the player, but his present contractual status is not consistent with his professional standing. We think the better clubs and managers will be able to work the proposed contracts system in such a way as to prove the worst fears of its critics ill founded.

ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

22. One feature of the game has very greatly impressed the committee—the vast amount of devoted voluntary effort which goes into the running of the thousands of clubs, the leagues and local and national associations. We trust that the many thousands of people involved will continue to find satisfaction in this voluntary work, without which the organised game could not continue. There is no doubt, however, that as the clubs, leagues and competitions multiply the administration becomes heavier and more complex and therefore more difficult to make effective without more paid help. In England we think the County Associations need the help of a regional network of officers appointed and paid for by the Football Association for such matters as the recruitment, training and grading of referees and the organising of extended coaching schemes and the development of the game in their areas.

23. Each of the three national Associations could be improved; we realise they each have their own problems. Their main functions are to act as the parliament of the game in each country and to foster its development generally. We think they should remain separate bodies and this not only because neither Wales nor Scotland would suffer their national game to be ruled from London.

24. As national representative bodies each Association is imperfect. We have already referred to the need to rescind the Rules which prevent professional players (and in Scotland and Wales even paid officials and professional referees) from serving on the Council and committees of the Associations. We think that the Referees' Association, the Professional Players' Association and the Association of Secretaries and Managers should be represented on each Council. In Scotland there is a number of national Associations with a good deal of autonomy and we recommend their amalgamation to create a strong single national Association. In Wales there is a need to widen the basis of representation.

25. Until recently, if criticised for inactivity, each Association had the excuse of shortage of funds. But since 1964 the position of the English Association has been transformed and that of the Scottish Association greatly improved by money received from the Pool Promoters Association. This improved financial position has opened the way for the Associations to take a much more active part in fostering the game as a whole. We think this would be helped if they were less involved with the day-to-day affairs of the two Football Leagues and concentrated more on the amateur game, on general problems and in looking ahead at the needs of the game and anticipating problems before they arise. In order to do this effectively the English Association needs to have a strong representative executive committee and bring in some younger men.

26. Had we been reporting four or five years ago we would have had to paint a very black picture of the financial state of the game, with declining attendances badly affecting League clubs and the three national associations precariously dependent on the receipts from one international match. The picture is now very much brighter. In England attendances have improved, particularly in the First Division, and the introduction of the League Cup and the increased popularity of the F.A. Challenge Cup have brought more money into the game. More important have been the Agreements between the Pool Promoters Association and (i) the Football League (also covering the Scottish Football League) in 1964, and (ii) the Football Association (also covering the Scottish Football Association) in 1966. As a result, in 1966-67 the two Football Leagues received £800,000 for the use of the copyright in their fixture lists and the two Football Associations received about £100,000, where formerly they received nothing.

27. The "pools" money received by the two Leagues has helped the clubs, partly by relieving them of certain expenditure (on referees' and linesmen's fees in both countries and on pension and accident provision in England), and partly by way of a direct contribution to their revenues. The English clubs have also been helped by the rising proceeds of a 4 per cent levy on net gate receipts and by bigger payments for the broadcasting and televising of matches, so that in 1966-67 each club received on average about £11,000 from these general sources. Nevertheless our analysis in Chapter III of the finances of League clubs shows many to be in a very poor way financially. All except a handful of English and Scottish clubs could not continue on their gate receipts but are dependent on contributions from Supporters' Clubs, from various kinds of sweepstakes and minor gambling devices, and from the hand-outs made by the two Leagues. The Scottish League as a whole is made solvent by the transfer fees paid by clubs in the English League for Scottish players. In the English Football League the Fourth Division clubs were carrying forward cumulative losses of £518,000, the Third Division of £260,000 and the Second Division of £140,000. The First Division clubs on the other hand had accumulated surpluses of nearly £1.7 million.

28. Our remedies for this situation are to be found in a variety of recommendations and suggestions. We have recommended for example, changes in the structure of both the English and Scottish Leagues, designed primarily to increase the competitive attractiveness of matches and reduce their costs, but also in the case of England to give the top clubs more elbow room to take advantage of the various European competitions. We also think the business management of many clubs could be improved and wish to see clubs paying more attention to professional management. We should not like increasing subsidies, from whatever source, to rise to the point when club management had little incentive to be efficient. If the changes we envisage are made they will not close the gap which has opened up in recent years between a small number of clubs, mainly in the big centres of population, which are rich and carry off most of the honours, and the clubs in the lower levels of the League. There is no need to create a super league, it already exists in the top clubs of the First Division. Most of the changes in the past decade have helped these clubs—abolition of the maximum wage, rising transfer fees, growth of European

competitions, the televising of matches, and the greater use of the motor car. Their match receipts have risen faster than their costs, at a time when the reverse was true of all other clubs. Two or three of the Scottish clubs are in the same advantageous position. We see no harm in this growing gap—indeed it is good for Britain's international role in the game that we can produce ten or a dozen teams that can match the best in the world. It would be unfortunate, however, if all League clubs thought they had "to keep up with the Jones's" and some of the financial problems of clubs in the Third and Fourth Divisions are due to attempting to do this. Nor do we think that all of them will be able to continue much longer to carry so many professional players at current wage levels.

29. The payments by the Pool Promoters Association, combined with increased receipts from international matches, have transformed the financial position of the English and Scottish Football Associations. As a result they are both now in a position to meet the costs of providing effective administrative structure for the game. The English Football Association which also, of course, benefitted from being host country for the World Cup, is now particularly well placed financially. We think it should meet the cost of providing a regional network of officers who would assist the County Associations in the recruitment, training and grading of referees, in arranging regional coaching schemes and in fostering the game in their areas. It should also be able to meet a substantial part of the running costs of the extended coaching scheme which we recommend. The Scottish Association will probably need rather more outside help with coaching developments but is otherwise in a sound financial position. The Football Association of Wales has benefitted neither from the Pools nor from international matches and is not well placed financially to provide the kind of administration or coaching we envisage for England.

30. Our financial survey so far has shown that: (i) notwithstanding some problems, the two national Leagues should, with suitable adjustments, be able to finance the main structure of the professional game; and (ii) the English and Scottish Associations are now in a position to meet the administrative and day-to-day needs of the amateur game. There remains the problem of financing the capital expenditure needed to improve the facilities and grounds in both the amateur and the professional game.

31. Amateur clubs are extremely dependent on Local Authorities. Our evidence shows a good provision of pitches, except in certain areas, but inadequate provision of changing and washing facilities. These inadequacies have become more apparent with the rising standards of housing and home comfort. Very little money from central funds is earmarked for improving sports facilities and football gets only a very small share of that. Local Authorities have done a very great deal for football clubs, even for many professional clubs, but their limited resources are subject to heavy claims for schools, housing, etc. We do not think, therefore, that they will be able to do enough quickly enough out of their own resources to improve facilities for amateur clubs.

32. The position as regards League clubs is more complex. Though a great deal has been spent on ground improvements in recent years, a very great deal still needs doing. This is particularly clear if account is taken of the social and economic trends mentioned earlier and if the clubs are going to be in the position to compete effectively for a good share of the rising expenditure on leisure

activities. At one extreme there ought to be several stadia which can match the best in other countries and the international standing of our top clubs. At the other extreme we should like to see clubs developing social and sporting facilities, car parking and improved amenities in conjunction with the local Council and the relevant organisations in the area.

33. Some of the big developments, we believe, could be financed with the help of private capital, particularly if the present ceiling on dividends in the English League were raised. The special levy on high transfer fees recommended in paragraph 303 should bring in a little to help desirable schemes for the smaller league clubs. And if a group scheme indicated in paragraphs 435-7 could be developed by either League, the saving in taxation, used to aid ground improvement, could be of considerable help.

34. It would be easier to meet the needs of improved facilities generally, foster selected schemes and experiments, and stimulate arrangements between clubs, private capital and Local Authorities, if a body existed with funds specially for these purposes. Hence our recommendation for the establishment of the Football Levy Board financed by a very small addition to the present levy on all football pools.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Schoolboys

35. (1) The choice of the winter team game at school should be guided by the following principles:

- (i) Where only one major winter game can be offered the game chosen is likely to be of the greatest educational and recreational potential when:
 - (a) it accords with the interests of the majority of the boys;
 - (b) it follows the major local community interest as reflected in the prevailing opportunities for post-school participation.
- (ii) Where only one major winter team game is offered by the school it is of the utmost importance that the boys should be free to play other games or sports outside the school.
- (iii) In most comprehensive schools it is manifestly possible to offer both football codes and it is in keeping with the whole concept of comprehensive schooling that both should be offered.
- (iv) Many other large boys' schools could and should offer both football codes. We have evidence of both codes operating successfully in schools of less than 500 boys in urban areas.

(Paragraph 44.)

(2) The Associated Schoolboy Scheme in all three countries should be amended so as to leave a schoolboy free to make his own choice of club at the end of his period as an Associated Schoolboy, with the proviso, however, that no other club shall be entitled to approach him without his club's consent before three months of the date his attachment is due to terminate. (Paragraph 67).

The Football League

- (3)(i) The Football League should be increased in size by the addition of 6-10 of the better professional non-league clubs;

- (ii) There should be five divisions, the top three on a national basis, the remaining clubs to be divided into North and South divisions;
- (iii) At the end of each season the bottom four clubs in the first three divisions should be relegated and the top four clubs (the top two in each of the two regional divisions) be promoted. The bottom two in the North and South Divisions would have to stand for re-election but would not be re-elected if they were in the bottom two in more than two seasons consecutively;
- (iv) The First Division should be reduced to 18 clubs;
- (v) The size of the other four divisions should be either 18, 20, and two 22's, or four 20's, or some similar figures having regard to the length of the season, and the financial effects of having 20 or 22 clubs in one division.

(Paragraph 163).

The Scottish Football League

(4) The Scottish Football League should be re-organised on the lines of the scheme put forward by Brechin City in May, 1967, for three Leagues on a 16—12—12 basis with an extra competition for the Second and Third Division clubs to make up the fixtures required for a full season. (Paragraph 191).

Maximum Dividends

(5) The present maximum dividend of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent should be raised to 15 per cent in the case of Football League clubs whose shares are freely transferable. (Paragraph 199).

The Position of Managers

(6) Managers of Football League clubs should be exempted from the operation of Rule 45(a) (vi) of the Football Association, which prohibits a Director from receiving any remuneration in respect of his office as director or as an employee of the club. They should not be entitled to receive any remuneration as directors, but the fact that they were paid officers of clubs should not exclude them from Boards. (Paragraph 216).

Apprentices

(7) When an Apprentice signs as a full professional player at 17 or 18 years of age he should be free to sign for any club, except that no other club shall be entitled to approach him without his club's consent before three months of the end of his apprenticeship period. (Paragraph 232).

Shamateurism

- (8) The Football Association should:
 - (i) recognise that Rule 25, governing payments to amateurs, is broken regularly by many senior amateur clubs and players, and frame future policy accordingly rather than either make occasional efforts to enforce the rule or continue to ignore its infringement;
 - (ii) permit leagues and competitions under its jurisdiction to have a new category of player—called a “semi-professional” or Form Z player—

who could receive up to say, £10 a week, but whose registration and transfer would be much freer and simpler than those of the full professional;

- (iii) encourage one or two of the senior amateur leagues under its jurisdiction either to become open to both amateurs and professionals, or to amateur and Form Z players, if the arrangement under (ii) is accepted. To this end the Amateur Cup, suitably renamed, should be made open, possibly excluding League clubs, or a new national cup competition should be established to cater for "intermediate" clubs. (*Paragraph 250*).

See Minority Report (paragraphs 467-473) of Mr. W. J. Slater.

Permit Players

(9) Rule 30 of the Football Association, which prohibits a former registered professional player from playing as an amateur without a Permit from the Association, should be rescinded. (*Paragraph 251*).

Provident and Accident Schemes

- (10)(i) The Provident Scheme of the Football League should be converted into a modern contributory pension scheme to provide a lump sum payable on retirement from League football, a deferred pension payable at 60-65, a death benefit and possibly a "Top Hat" policy for higher paid professionals. (*Paragraph 256*).
- (ii) A new Accident Insurance scheme should be devised. (*Paragraph 257*).
- (iii) The Scottish League should introduce contributory pension and accident insurance schemes. There should be full transferability between the English and Scottish schemes. (*Paragraph 258*).

The Transfer System

- (11)(i) Every contract between a club and a professional player should be for a definite period, at the end of which either party should be free to renew it. (*Paragraph 284*).
- (ii) The change should not apply to movement of players between countries except in so far as the two countries concerned have entered into a reciprocal arrangement to apply the contract system in this new way. (*Paragraph 298*).

(12) The Football League should make a special levy on all transfer fees over £25,000, the rate of the levy to be higher the higher the fee, and be paid by the purchasing club, the proceeds being used by the League for encouraging ground improvements. (*Paragraph 303*).

Referees and Linesmen

(13) The Football League should appoint a Director of Referees, responsible for the selection and training of referees and linesmen on the League's list, and for their appointment to officiate at League matches. It would be the Director's responsibility to fit the abilities of officials on the list to the needs of particular matches, not for selection to be by rota or by chance as it largely is under the present system. (*Paragraph 317(i)*).

(14) The Football League should establish a small cadre of referees and linesmen, within their present list, who had proved outstanding in handling difficult and major matches. These should receive either a retainer of say, £1,000 a year, or a higher fee per match, but would not need to be full-time. The ladder of promotion would still remain open right to the top, indeed the development proposed would be a natural extension of it. (*Paragraph 317(ii)*).

(15) There should be a general increase in fees. Associated with this increase should go an improvement in the status of referees and linesmen, e.g. by improving the quality of their accommodation and by the respect shown to them on the field. (*Paragraph 317(iii)*).

(16) Developments on similar lines are needed in Scotland, but the scale of the Scottish problem is not as large and the Scottish F.A. already employs Referee Supervisors. (*Paragraph 318*).

Discipline

(17) The only players on the field who should be entitled to approach the referee should be the two captains. They should do so only to ask for clarification of his decision, or to ask for a second opinion from the linesman, but then only rarely and in clear cases. It should be treated as a serious breach of conduct for any other player to approach the referee during a game. (*Paragraph 333*).

(18)(i) The practice of the Essex County Football Association whereby every reported case of misconduct is treated as a charge against both the club and the player, should be generally adopted.

(ii) The disciplinary authority should publicly caution, censure or fine a club or its directors and officials where it is shown that the player's misconduct arises from their policy or instructions, or their failure to take adequate steps to prevent such behaviour.

(*Paragraph 335*).

(19)(i) The commissions of the disciplinary committees of the Football Association should have an independent chairman when dealing with "personal hearing" cases. He should be legally qualified. He should be appointed by the Council of the national Association in consultation with the Referees' Association and the Professional Footballers' Association, at least until such time as these two bodies are represented on the three Councils. These special disciplinary commissions with their independent chairman should also deal with any appeals from the disciplinary committees of County or affiliated associations. (*Paragraph 339*).

(ii) A right of appeal should be given in two classes of cases: (a) when the penalty is exceptionally severe, e.g. suspension for more than half a season or a fine of over £500; or (b) where the independent chairman gives leave to appeal. (*Paragraph 340*).

(iii) Players appearing before the "personal hearing" tribunal should have the right to ask for legal representation and this should be allowed at the discretion of the independent chairman. A similar right, at the discretion of the chairman, should apply in appeal cases. (*Paragraph 341*).

(20) There should also be an independent chairman for all commissions and committees dealing with allegations of misconduct or breach of rules by clubs,

manager, referees, etc., where a personal hearing is provided and a similar right of legal representation should be available. (*Paragraph 342*).

(21) Similar disciplinary arrangements should apply to Scotland and Wales. (*Paragraph 343*).

Structure of Administration

(22) In England the structure of County Associations should be strengthened by the establishment of a network of regional officers appointed and financed by the Football Association. These officers would be responsible for organising coaching schemes; for helping the county associations, e.g. in the training, examining and grading of referees, and in development of the game and the facilities available in their areas. (*Paragraph 359*).

The Football Association

(23) Having regard to the representative role of the F.A. Council its membership should be widened to cover three interests not at present directly represented on it: the Referees, the Professional Footballers, and the Secretaries and Managers. (*Paragraph 368*).

(24) Nobody over the age of 70 should serve on the Council and its committees. (*Paragraph 369*).

(25) The Council of the Association should examine its constitution and committee structure with a view to providing a more effective central policy and planning committee. This committee would, of course, be responsible to the Council and its major policy recommendations would require the approval of the Council. But the initiative and the responsibility for taking a general view of the needs of the game and for looking ahead would rest primarily with this committee. (*Paragraph 374*).

(26) The Association should make greater use of expert and experienced advice on particular committees and enquiries. (*Paragraph 397*).

(27) The rules of the Football Association which prohibit or limit the participation of former or current professional players in the administration of the game should be rescinded. (*Paragraph 399*).

See Minority Report paragraphs 474-477 of Mr. W. J. Slater.

The Scottish Football Association

(28) The Scottish F.A. and the affiliated national associations should, as a matter of urgency, enter into discussions with a view to providing a single national governing body for the game in Scotland. (*Paragraph 411*).

(29) The Council of the Association should be enlarged to include a representative from the Scottish Professional Footballers' Association, the Scottish Referees' Association, and of Secretaries and Managers. (*Paragraph 412*).

(30) Article 34 prohibiting paid officials of a club or association, professional players and referees from serving on the Council of the Association, should be rescinded. (*Paragraph 412*).

The Football Association of Wales

(31) The composition of the Council should be altered to improve its balance and representative character. (*Paragraph 417*).

(32) Rule 42 prohibiting registered professional players, registered referees and paid officials of an association, league or club from serving on the Council of the Association should be rescinded. (*Paragraph 418*).

Copyright in League Fixture Lists

(33) At the first appropriate opportunity the English/Scottish Leagues' copyright in their fixture lists should be statutorily confirmed. (*Paragraph 449*).

Taxation

(34) The time has come for a fresh look at the treatment of sports clubs and organisations from the viewpoint of taxation. (*Paragraph 451*).

(35) The Education Departments should be given statutory power to make matching grants to professional clubs to build sports facilities which will be open to *substantial* community use. (*Paragraph 456*).

The Football Levy Board

(36)(i) A levy of 1 per cent should be made on the gross proceeds of all pools, after the deduction for the Pool Betting tax levied by the Government. (*Paragraph 464*).

(ii) The spending of the levy should be administered by a Football Levy Board appointed partly by the Government and partly by certain representative bodies on the model approved by Parliament in the Horserace Levy Board. (*Paragraph 464*).

(iii) The money should be used for the improvement of facilities for football in England, Scotland and Wales. (*Paragraph 464*).

See Minority Report (Paragraphs 478-480) in which Mr. Lewis Hawser and Mr. Magnus Williamson recommend that the levy should be 2 per cent.

Signed: D. N. CHESTER (*Chairman*)

CLIFFORD BARCLAY
NICHOLAS DAVENPORT
BERNARD DONOGHUE
B. MERVYN GRIFFITHS
LEWIS HAWSER
A. D. MUNROW
W. J. SLATER
ARTHUR TILEY
BRIAN WALDEN
MAGNUS J. WILLIAMSON

H. E. CLINKARD, *Secretary*
7th March, 1968

CHAPTER II

THE AMATEUR GAME

36. The great bulk of football in England, Scotland and Wales is played by teams in competitions open only to clubs which satisfy or claim to satisfy the definition of an amateur club. Professional teams and players get mass publicity, but measured in terms of number of players and matches they are relatively insignificant. There are over 33,000 amateur clubs playing in organised competitions and some 14,000 schools are members of Schools' Football Associations. The amateur game ranges from boys playing in quite primitive conditions (on waste ground with improvised goal posts) to schoolboys playing at Wembley in an international match before 95,000 spectators; from clubs playing on a field rented annually from the local farmer, or a pitch rented for each match from a local authority, to clubs with their own grounds, floodlighting and facilities comparable to those possessed by many of the small professional clubs; from clubs only kept going by the financial efforts of the players to those which can afford to meet the whole of their players' expenses and send teams abroad for holiday matches.

37. We propose to deal with this diversity under three heads:—

- (i) School football.
- (ii) Youth football.
- (iii) The rest of the amateur game.

In a final section we deal with the provision of coaching facilities.

SCHOOLBOY FOOTBALL

38. There are several outstanding problems. Some boys get less opportunity to play association football than we, or they, would like; alternatively some lack adequate opportunities or the physical facilities to be able to play it well. The voluntary help, without which schoolboy football cannot survive, seems nowadays to be more difficult to obtain. The raising of the school leaving age and the change in structure of the educational system, especially the trend towards comprehensive education, have blurred the boundaries of control exercised by the organisations concerned with school football in England and neither a new demarcation nor amalgamation have yet proved possible. Wales and Scotland do not have this particular difficulty, but Welsh school football has felt itself largely isolated from the national association. Scottish school football feels the transition to the senior game hindered by the multiplicity of associations contending for the boys' subsequent allegiance. All associations expressed some concern—the Welsh very strongly—that as rugby was favoured in schools providing most of the students at Universities and Colleges of Education the result was a relative shortage of schoolmasters with a knowledge of, and interest in, the association game. And in all three countries concern was expressed about the impact of the professional game on the schools and on

school football, though we also encountered a changing and more approving attitude to football as a possible career for the physically gifted boy.

39. It is essential that these problems should be viewed against the background of the tremendous amount of effort put into the running of the game in schools and the opportunities offered for participation which are the envy of most countries abroad. Indeed, the very excellence of the conditions under which many schoolboys play their soccer provides something of a problem for them when they seek to continue to play the game after they leave.

40. It must be remembered that football was being played in the schools—the Public Schools at any rate—before the Football Association itself was founded in 1863. In the State schools enthusiastic teachers were running teams, out of school hours, long before formal physical education found its way into the curriculum. In South London schools had formed themselves into an association by 1885; organisations as widely spread as Newcastle, Liverpool, Reading, Birmingham and London came together with others to form themselves into the English Schools' Football Association in 1904. In Wales the earliest school association, in Cardiff, dates back to 1896 and the national association to 1912. The Scottish Schools' Association was founded in 1905 with membership restricted to Secondary Schools, followed in 1910 by the Scottish Elementary Schools F.A. Both functioned in their fields, organising various competitions and international matches, the former up to 18 years, the latter to 15 years, but there was much over-lapping and in 1962 a unified constitution was adopted and the Scottish Schools' F.A., as we know it today, came into being with control over school football at all age levels. Schoolboy international matches have been played between the three countries since 1911; indeed matches between England and Wales were played from 1907 onwards. Since 1950 schoolboy internationals have been played at Wembley and crowds have now risen to a capacity gate of nearly 100,000. But the Wembleys are simply peak occasions in busy seasons for all three national associations which organise various championships for various age groups as well as some general and some selective coaching. The English Schools' Football Association claims affiliated membership of more than 12,000 schools and suggests that over a quarter of a million boys are being catered for in out-of-school-hours football. The Scottish Schools' Football Association reported 1,260 schools in membership in 1966 and the Welsh Schools' Football Association 431 for the same year.

CHOICE OF GAME WHILE AT SCHOOL

41. In all three countries there is some evidence of an earlier swing (mainly between the wars) away from soccer and towards rugby as the official school game in secondary grammar schools or their equivalent. There has also been a more recent post-war trend in soccer schools to permit the playing of other winter team games, a trend which has not been paralleled by a corresponding move in rugby schools to "liberalise" their winter programme. In Wales generally, and in South Wales in particular, both trends were represented to us as serious now and likely to be disastrous for the future of Welsh soccer if they continued.

42. We do not wish to undertake the singularly unprofitable exercise of discussing the relative merits of the two games. Soccer is the most widespread and popular game in Britain. It follows therefore, that, in a country which

accepts participation in team games as an integral part of the educational curriculum, the opportunity to play soccer ought not be denied to a substantial proportion of those of school age. Unevenness of opportunity is likely to have particularly unfortunate long term effects when applied to that section of the school population from which succeeding generations of teachers are recruited.

43. All this is far from saying that soccer ought to be compulsory in the State schools. It has long been recognised in British schools that the headmaster must in the final analysis be the judge of what to include and what to omit from his school's curriculum and out-of-school activities. The view, expressed to us with some vigour, that Local Education Authorities or the Education Departments should make the matter of soccer playing in the schools the subject of some kind of directive is totally unacceptable to us. Nor do we accept the view that it is incumbent on a headmaster to offer both codes regardless of the size of his school. A school, and collectively the individuals in it, gains by a strong team operating a strong fixture list. Moreover, there is much to be said for other, and substantially contrasting, activities finding their way into the educational and recreational provision in the school before a second major winter team game is offered.

44. **We recommend** that choice of the winter team game at school should be guided by the following principles:

- (i) Where only one major winter game can be offered the game chosen is likely to be of the greatest educational and recreational potential when (a) it accords with the interests of the majority of the boys; and (b) it follows the major local community interest as reflected in the prevailing opportunities for post-school participation.
- (ii) Where only one major winter team game is offered by the school it is of the utmost importance that the boys should be free to play other games or sports outside the school.
- (iii) In most comprehensive schools it is manifestly possible to offer both football codes and it is in keeping with the whole concept of comprehensive schooling that both should be offered.
- (iv) Many other large boys' schools could and should offer both football codes. We have evidence of both codes operating successfully in schools of less than 500 boys in urban areas.

45. It was also represented to us that specialist physical education colleges provided more training in the rugby than in the association code and that this distorted the emphasis on the games in the schools. We can find no evidence of this; both codes appear to receive comparable treatment. In fact there is evidence that association football, with a much more extensively developed coaching scheme, has perhaps received slightly more emphasis in the past. It is possible that more P.E. specialists favour the rugby game (and this could be a result of the uneven proportions in which the two games are offered in the schools from which teachers are recruited) or that the rugby teams of the colleges specialising in P.E. receive more publicity and give a false impression of curriculum emphasis.

46. Some other factors seemed to us to contribute to the present Welsh position. Because the schools have had no official representative on their F.A. Council their viewpoint or discontent cannot be effectively voiced. The lack of

any coaching scheme sponsored by the Welsh F.A.⁽¹⁾ is most acutely felt in the schools. It is also fair to comment that in Wales the Welsh Rugby Union has been alive and active, supporting the formation of new clubs and the growth of established ones as well as showing a keen interest in coaching, an interest which has recently culminated in the appointment of a national coach. Last, but by no means least, the Welsh Rugby Union has provided substantially more financial support for schools in Wales than the Welsh F.A. has felt itself able to provide for Welsh school soccer.

47. One deciding factor in the minds of some headmasters and other educationalists appears to be the image of soccer acquired by the impact of the professional game. This is an issue of general importance not bearing only on the question of choice of game at school.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

48. The Schools' Association of all three countries commented on the decline or impending decline of voluntary help. Wales and England remarked on the increasing average age of committee members, and Scotland reported that one district had found it impracticable to continue its membership of the national body mainly because of a lack of male teachers in the district's schools. Wales reported its lowest ebb as coinciding with the depression years, but reported also many amalgamations of previously independent districts and a failure of some inter-district organisations to survive the war years.

49. The three main Schools' Associations have been dipping into their reserves in recent years. Wales finds itself increasingly dependent on donations. The Welsh S.F.A. told us that only the increase in donations had saved them from collapse. Home schoolboy internationals over the past four seasons have produced six gates which were losses and one showing a negligible profit. Scotland still operates home internationals at a slight profit, but shows an annual deficit overall.

50. In England the general picture of international gates is rosier and the annual Wembley game a source of quite considerable revenue. The E.S.F.A. has, therefore, been able to support needy county and local associations to the tune of £4,000 each year and give something to other national Schools Football Associations and School Sports Associations. Nevertheless a balance of £31,000 in 1961 had been reduced to £23,000 by 1966.

51. A sharp differentiation must be made between the "gate matches", with which the Schools Associations are concerned as the organisers of competitive championships and representative games at various levels, and games played on fields available to boys at schools both in and out of school hours.

52. The Associations expressed their appreciation of the help they receive from professional league clubs, senior amateur clubs and sports committees of large firms but the E.S.F.A. criticised the cost of hiring some municipal stadia (the W.S.F.A. regretted that in many instances access to town pitches cannot be gained at all). The English Association also noted the shortage of covered areas, floodlit facilities and of any real attempt to integrate the school facilities into the general recreational needs of the community.

53. While, naturally, some witnesses felt that the overall facilities for football at school could be better, the statement was also made that they were steadily

⁽¹⁾ We understand a national coach has been appointed and will take up his duties in April 1968.

improving. It was only in Wales that we experienced strong criticism of the general facilities and this has to be seen in the context of (a) the general shortage of level playing space in some of the valleys and (b) the tendency, already noted, to devote available space to rugby.

54. In general, and without undertaking a specific survey, we have formed the opinion that school facilities are fairly good though inadequate in some rural areas and in densely built-up urban areas.

RELATIONSHIP OF SCHOOLS ASSOCIATIONS TO SENIOR NATIONAL BODIES

55. The E.S.F.A., is conscious of the benefits derived from being directly represented on the F.A. Council. It spoke of a two way traffic in opinions, and thought it would be beneficial to both interests if all County Football Associations co-opted a schools' representative. Scotland also expressed satisfaction with the direct representation which it enjoys on the S.F.A., but regretted the fragmentation of the senior structure through the multifarious, overlapping and sometimes conflicting interests of the various sections which combine in membership of the S.F.A. Council. In contrast the W.S.F.A., without any such representation, felt itself largely isolated and unable to express its viewpoint or make its day-to-day needs felt except through the mechanism of special deputations or meetings. They were grateful for the £200 annual grant from the W.F.A., but felt the need of advice, support and co-operation over a range of problems and issues. The W.F.A., for its part, felt that relationships were satisfactory and put forward the view that school representatives could always be invited when matters affecting them were being discussed and that in any case schools were represented on the organisations affiliated to the Welsh F.A. We are glad to hear that since we took evidence from these bodies in Cardiff in April, 1967, the Welsh F.A. has been thinking the matter over and that a proposal to grant the Welsh Schools' F.A. a seat on the Council will be made to the Annual General Meeting in May, 1968.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO ENGLISH SCHOOLS' ASSOCIATIONS

56. In Wales, while the Association concerned itself in the earlier years with the younger age groups, corresponding to the former elementary schools, it enlarged its activities in time to embrace the older boys. The P. Ivor Tuck Trophy, first competed for in the season 1958-59, is open to any school in Wales and spans the age group 15-18. In Scotland the two national bodies dealing with secondary and elementary education became the Scottish Schools' Association in 1962. In England development has been different. The E.S.F.A. first confined its activities to the elementary school age range and, following changes in educational structure and nomenclature, kept to the age range of the Secondary Modern School and preponderantly to the personnel of those schools. Some counties had Grammar Schools' Football Associations, and there was a loosely organised Public Schools Organisation, when, in 1952, the F.A. itself organised an F.A. Schools week, particularly for the boys at these types of school. Since that time an overall organisation has developed, first calling itself the Conference of Grammar Schools' Football Associations then, in April 1966, the English Schools' Senior Football Association and since April

1967 the Conference of English Senior Schools' Football Associations. The Conference has held a National Festival of Football at Bognor Regis for the past three years and organised the 15-18 year old international matches with Scotland and Wales.

57. Since 1952 comprehensive schools have spread rapidly and notice of intention has been given of raising the school leaving age to 16. Both developments will enlarge the scope of the work which the E.S.F.A. considers to be its proper concern and to reduce the number of schools with which the E.S.S.F.A. can be essentially concerned. All must ask, therefore, whether there is room for two national associations, or whether it would be in the interest of school football for the two bodies to settle their differences and join together?

58. Our view is that it should be possible to accommodate the aims and ideas of both associations within one national association. After all, any such national body can only provide a framework within which a variety of local bodies and schools may work, and a representative voice in the highest councils of football administration and policy. We are, therefore, very glad to know that the committees of the two Associations agreed in November, 1967, to recommend to their Annual General Meetings that they should accept in principle that the ultimate aim is amalgamation to form an English Schools' Football Association to cater for schools football at all levels. We understand that a joint committee is already at work and trust that the discussions and negotiations will prove successful.

THE SCHOOLS AND LEAGUE FOOTBALL

59. Over a number of years the English Schools' Football Association has found itself increasingly embarrassed because its well supported and efficiently run system of selective trials and representative games was serving as an effective filter by means of which boys with football promise were singled out and approaches from League clubs were thus facilitated. We have been told of matches at which it was deemed necessary to assign no less than six schoolmaster officials to the specific task of isolating the boy players from the approaches of club scouts offering financial inducements in return for promises to join particular clubs as apprentices at a subsequent stage in their football careers. Not only were such approaches in contravention of the rules but they also exerted unjustifiable pressures on boys still undergoing their education; and the nature and manner of the approaches were such that the knowledge and advice of the Headmaster frequently could not be brought to bear on the matter at all.

60. The Associated Schoolboy Scheme, as developed by the Football League in 1964-65, has stemmed from this situation and it is against this background of the earlier unsatisfactory, and occasionally unsavoury, history that its value must be assessed.

61. Rule 48 of the Football League, the substance of which is embodied in Rule 33 of the Football Association, reads as follows:

"Signing of Associate Schoolboys"

"48. Clubs may, for the purposes of training and coaching, register boys over the age of 13 years on 1st September in any season who are still attending School under the following conditions:

(1) Whilst the boy is on the roll of a recognised school priority must at all

times be given to any school and/or schools organisation activities.

- (2) Boys under the age of 15 on 1st September in any season may not play football for a Club.
- (3) Any boy over the age of 15 on 1st September who remains on the roll of a recognised school may play for the Club for which he is registered only with the permission of his Headmaster or Headmistress.
- (4) A boy who has been registered for a Club will not be registered with the Football League for another Club without the consent of his previous Club and his Headmaster or Headmistress or with the special consent of the Management Committee whose decision in this matter shall be final.
- (5) The number of boys registered by a Club under this scheme shall not exceed 40 at any one time. This number may include a maximum of 15 in any of the age groups 13-14 years and 14-15 years, and a maximum of 10 over School-leaving age.
- (6) The form of registration after all particulars have been filled in including dates of signatures must be signed by the boy attested by his parent or guardian and by the Headmaster or Headmistress and forwarded to the Secretary of the Football League within five days of such signature.
- (7) No Club shall induce a schoolboy to leave school prematurely to sign as an Apprentice Player and any such registration shall not be accepted by the League without written consent of the Headmaster or Headmistress or the Local Education Authority".

62. The Associated Schoolboy scheme has the great merit of bringing negotiations into the open and, by doing so, of enabling them to be controlled in the best interests of school football and of the schoolboys themselves. In February, 1968, the number of schoolboys registered with the Football League was over 1,200, distributed approximately as follows: 13-14 age group, 55; 14-15 age group, 240; 15-16 age group, 480; 16-17 age group, 280; and 17 and over, 150. A further 214 registrations were awaiting clearance by the English Schools' Football Association.

63. It is natural, with the increasingly competitive character of League football and the rewards for both club and player which flow from success in the search for talent, that clubs should have turned their attention to the young entrant. In ideal circumstances this can provide the schoolboy with the pleasure, excitement and benefit of learning the game in the atmosphere of top class football without detriment to his education or prospects. Unfortunately, the financial stakes involved can impair the judgement of parents and schoolmasters and lower the ethical standards of League Clubs.

64. In the private negotiations which went on previously, it would be unfair to imply that League clubs or their agents were the only people whose actions were from time to time improper. We have heard of instances of the parent "shopping around" aiming to capitalise on his son's abilities, and of the schoolmaster acting as a middleman in the same process. Some of this still goes on. It would be naive to imagine that with the inception of the scheme all abuses have ceased. Some boys have registered with clubs so distant that it is difficult to see how they can receive much training and coaching, which after all is the prime purpose of the scheme and not the tying of a boy at an early age to a particular

club. We feel we must record that in mentioning the abuse of the present scheme witnesses without opportunity for collusion picked out certain clubs as being "good" and others as "bad", and that both categories included some prominent and successful clubs.

65. Most of these abuses arise from the rule which ties the schoolboy to the club. Associated Schoolboys are registered by the League and their registration cannot be transferred to another League club without the consent of the holding club. Unless, therefore, his club fails to offer to sign him as an Apprentice within a reasonable time (judged to be six months) of his ceasing to be an Associated Schoolboy, he cannot sign an Apprentice form for another club without his club's consent. Strangely enough, considering the F.A. is supposed to have the interests of the game as a whole at heart, this restriction is fully spelt out in Rule 33 of the Football Association.⁽¹⁾ On leaving school an Associated Schoolboy cannot sign as Apprentice for another club unless either he has his club's written consent, or his club has not offered to sign him as an Apprentice within six months. When it is borne in mind that once signed as an Apprentice he cannot sign as a Professional player for another club without his club's written permission, it will be seen that the accident of signing a form at the age of 13 or 14 may determine a boy's football career over a long period. It is a desire to get a lien on a promising schoolboy, rather than a desire to help in the training of the young, that provides the motive force for many signings of Associated Schoolboys and encourages the abuse of the basic well-meaning intention.

66. A very similar scheme has just been introduced by the Scottish F.A. where, however, there is no Apprentice scheme. A schoolboy may sign Form "S" as either amateur or professional. On leaving school he may not be registered for any club other than the one to which he is attached as an Associated Schoolboy, unless that club has not within six months from his leaving school made him a proper written offer, or has given its written consent to his signing as a professional for another club in Scottish football. If the Associated Schoolboy signs Form "S" as an amateur and elects to retain amateur status after leaving school, he cannot within a period of two years be registered for a club in membership of the Scottish F.A. other than that for which he was an Associated Schoolboy, or for a club in membership of any other Association.

67. **We recommend** that the Associated Schoolboy Scheme in all three countries should be amended so as to leave a schoolboy free to make his own choice of club at the end of his period as an Associated Schoolboy with the proviso, however, that no other club shall be entitled to approach him without his club's consent before three months of the date his attachment is due to terminate.

FOOTBALL AS A CAREER

68. The comments just made reflect the Committee's judgement of what seems right and proper for children still at school and best for the general "health" of the schoolboy game, as well as a fear that the best of schoolboy football could easily degenerate, losing its own identity and becoming a kind of talent parade for the League clubs. But the comments are not intended to convey reservations about the career of professional footballers as such. League

⁽¹⁾ Rule 48(4) of the Welsh F.A. is substantially the same.

football is a substantial part of the entertainment industry; it makes demands for continually rising standards of skill and dedication, and it is self-evident that its players provide interest, entertainment and pleasure for millions.

YOUTH FOOTBALL

69. Youth Football means matches between teams all of whose players are under 18 years of age on 1st September of the season in which the match is played. The general significance of the term varies greatly from country to country and even within the countries. In Scotland the National Youth Competition is between representative sides of the affiliated national Associations and some other Scottish organisations concerned with youth which are able to field representative youth sides. The Youth Development Committee of the Scottish F.A. exists primarily to carry through the National Youth Competition and to select teams for Youth International Matches but has been able to extend its activities recently because of the money made available from the Pool Promoters Association.

70. In Wales, the Youth Cup competition, started in 1946-47, is managed and controlled by the Council of the W.F.A. itself. It is open to registered clubs of the W.F.A. and affiliated associations. The Cup has been won by teams which come from a youth organisation, e.g. a Boys' Club; but mostly the teams are from clubs fielding sides within the age group for the purpose of competing in the cup. The Welsh F.A. and some of its affiliated associations hold trial games directed towards the selection of representative sides. It was put to us that the existence of youth sides in Wales gave some boys still at school the opportunity to take part in soccer which was denied to them by the school itself. But the Schools' Association complained, on the other hand, that they were not brought into the picture of Youth Football at all, and that senior boys in their school sides had very little chance of gaining recognition for youth caps unless they played for League sides.

71. In England the Youth Challenge Cup is run by the Football Association and is mainly confined to clubs in full or associate membership of the Association. While it involves a great many clubs in its early stages, the later rounds are very much a try out for the young professionals of League clubs. The F.A. also provides a County Youth Challenge Cup Competition in which all the County Associations may enter a representative team. This competition specifically excludes professional and apprentice players and allows the player, with appropriate safeguards, to opt to play for the county of his birth or the county of affiliation of his current club.

72. The major problem of youth football is the no-man's land for boys between leaving school and joining an amateur club in the district. The Gap, as the Wolfenden Report⁽¹⁾ called it, is not, of course, peculiar to association football. One moment the boy has the organisation, stimulus and facilities provided by his school, the next he is sent out into a world in which no suitable provision may exist to meet his needs. Relatively very few boys aged 15-17 are ready to play with adult teams, yet teams catering just for their age group may not exist. He may be lucky to be at a school which has an old boys' club to which he makes a natural transition. There may be a Boys' or Youth Club

(1) *Sport and the Community*, 1960 (The Central Council of Physical Recreation).

nearby and even a youth football league. But generally speaking the boy who has shown playing talent at school is likely to find his needs catered for rather than the general run of boys. Clubs or governing bodies who take an interest in youth football tend, on the whole, to concentrate on boys with talent. Organisations concerned with youth whose aims are in some degree educational or pastoral, tend only too often to neglect the potential contribution of sport or to come to regard it as in competition with their own aims. Alternatively, perceiving its value as a "recruiter", they are possessive about players and teams, run their own leagues or championships and thus restrict the free flow of talent and access to better standards. Probably a high proportion of boys who have developed an interest and a degree of competence during school life are lost to the game during their first year out of school.

73. There is very often a great contrast between the very good conditions in which the boy plays his soccer at school and the makeshift or poor conditions in which he is expected to play it when he leaves. We have been continually confronted with this contrast. It does not stop short at the contrast in ground facilities, there are differences in availability of coaching, existence of fixture lists, and of officials ready to help or take an interest. Much thinking, even forward-looking planning, starts by an acceptance of the idea that recreational facilities for a town are something quite separate from the school facilities. There is an inclination to regard any kind of request for the use of school facilities by boys who have left school as a kind of intrusion. A Survey undertaken by the Lancashire County Council in 1967⁽¹⁾ showed that of 1,639 pitches owned by local education authorities only 394 were made available to the general public, most of these being in Barrow, Blackpool, Liverpool and Manchester. An expanding population in a relatively small island cannot afford the claims on land by the unnecessary duplication of facilities: one used from Monday to Friday and others used principally Saturday and Sunday or one used in the day time and the others in the evenings. There is, of course, a saturation usage of grass pitches beyond which both kinds of user suffer; but changing, showering and indoor training facilities are part of a nation's capital assets, and neither school nor adult organisations should continue to think sectionally about them. Nor should separate sports continue to think only of their own sport in this respect. Even in the matter of pitches, the use of hard surface areas and flood-lights could, with forethought and co-operation, provide valuable opportunities for play almost literally round the clock and throughout the week.

THE AMATEUR GAME IN GENERAL

74. Amateur football is a flourishing and highly organised activity. The number of affiliated clubs continues to rise, though most of the increase in England in recent years has been due to the recognition of Sunday football. The great bulk of teams play in league or knockout competitions—very few exist on "friendly" matches, in contrast to rugby and most other team sports. This emphasis on competition means that in addition to the many people needed to administer the affairs of individual clubs there have to be others who can be relied upon to organise the leagues and competitions and provide general authority. We deal with this aspect in Chapter VI (The Government of the

⁽¹⁾ *Survey of Existing Facilities for Sport and Physical Recreation, Preliminary Report, 1967.* (County of Lancashire).

Game). Here we propose to deal only with the very important matter of physical facilities.

75. The facilities available for playing amateur football vary very widely. The clubs in the Isthmian League, most of which compete prominently in the Amateur Challenge Cup, have grounds equipped with floodlighting, attract gates of 1,000–5,000 and have supporters' clubs and wealthy patrons. At the other extreme are the mass of small clubs based on the village, church, boys' club, public house, factory, office or on some purely chance grouping. Some have picturesque names—such as Athletico Fiorentina in Oxford or the Antiques and the Arabs in Sheffield. Few have much more than a rented pitch, the minimum equipment and their enthusiasm.

76. We thought it desirable to make some enquiries about the extent of the physical facilities available. We could not make a survey of the whole of England, Scotland and Wales but we found out what we readily could about certain areas for which information was available. The first major conclusion concerns the ownership of football pitches. A Survey conducted for the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in 1967⁽¹⁾ of certain towns revealed that about two-thirds of football pitches were owned by Local Authorities, 28 per cent belonged to industrial and other employers, leaving 7 per cent owned in other ways. The proportion owned by Local Authorities was higher in the New Towns. The figures have two implications. On the one hand they show how few clubs owned their own ground; most of the 7 per cent would, of course, be clubs renting from private landowners. This is one reason why football has not been able to attract many grants. On the other hand it shows the great dependence of football on the willingness of Local Authorities to spend money on facilities in the face of all the many other important claims on their limited funds.

77. The second conclusion is that though there are black spots there is evidence that, by and large, football is reasonably well provided with pitches. The Survey undertaken by Lancashire County Council in 1967 showed the position in Table 1.

TABLE 1
FOOTBALL PITCHES IN LANCASHIRE

Sub Region	Population	Public and Private Units	Available Educational Units	Total	Population per Available Pitch
Furness	104,370	13	25	38	2,740
Fylde	280,040	76	30	106	2,642
Lancaster	117,790	20	11	31	3,800
Mid Lancs	307,790	93	6	99	3,109
N.E. Lancs.	474,450	176	4	180	2,636
N. Merseyside	1,355,990	370	135	505	2,646
S. Lancs.	569,220	108	26	134	4,248
S.E. Lancs.	1,877,350	545	158	703	2,729
Total	5,087,000	1,401	395	1,796	—
Average					3,069

(1) *Open Space Surveys—Provision of Playing Pitches in New Towns* (Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1967).

78. The Sports Council is undertaking a study of standards of provision. Their report is not yet published but we have had access to their draft material. From this it appears that one football pitch per 2,750 population is a reasonable standard. Naturally the figure will vary between areas according to age distribution and the relative popularity of competing winter games. In all districts the standard will depend critically on the quality of laying, drainage and subsequent maintenance. But, bearing all these facts in mind, the target of one pitch per 2,750 population is a rough guide but much better than none at all. It will be seen that in the Lancashire Survey the overall position is generally satisfactory except for the southern part of the county. A survey of Cheshire⁽¹⁾ showed a rather worse situation, there being on average over the area only one pitch per 3,940 population. A further 144 pitches are needed in that county alone.

79. Table 2 shows the position for the Eastern Sports Council Region.

TABLE 2
FOOTBALL PITCHES IN THE EASTERN REGION

Authority	Population	Soccer Pitches			Population per Pitch
		Public	Private	Total	
Bedfordshire	275,410	88	35	123	2,240
Luton C.B.	152,560	48	12	60	2,540
Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely	294,010	100	38	138	2,130
Essex	1,077,680	303	168	471	2,290
Southend C.B.	165,860	44	8	52	3,190
Hertfordshire	872,100	308	103	411	2,120
Huntingdon and Peterborough	183,710	48	45	93	1,980
Norfolk	414,980	168	88	256	1,620
Norwich C.B.	118,100	67	7	74	1,600
Great Yarmouth C.B.	52,420	13	—	13	4,030
East Suffolk	249,710	74	38	112	2,230
Ipswich C.B.	121,280	54	17	71	1,710
West Suffolk	148,270	55	39	94	1,580
Total	4,126,090	1,370	598	1,968	
Average					2,250

Source: First appraisal of Major Facilities and Field Games, August 1967. Eastern Sports Council.

It would thus appear that the Eastern Region is well provided for in terms of pitches, only two areas, Great Yarmouth (4,030) and Southend (3,190), falling short of the standard.

80. The broad impression given by these figures is confirmed by information we have obtained about other parts of England. Liverpool, for example, would appear to have one pitch for each 2,714 people. But several of the new towns—particularly Peterlee and Newton Aycliffe—were much worse than the standard, as were several large towns surveyed by the Central Council for Physical Recreation in 1966⁽²⁾. What these figures do not reveal is whether many clubs are prevented from playing the game, or indeed from coming into existence, by

(1) *Recreation in Cheshire, Survey of existing facilities for Sport and Physical Recreation, Preliminary Report, May 1967* (Cheshire County Council).

(2) *Recreation in Local Authority Parks* (Central Council of Physical Recreation, 1966).

the lack of pitches. The Lancashire Survey showed that in a number of towns pitches were used on average more than twice a week. In Liverpool and Manchester the figure was just under 1.5 games per pitch per week. The growth of Sunday football has created a problem partly because not all Local Authorities' pitches are available and partly because it usually means an extra game on a ground already well used. This results in a shortage of pitches for Sunday football in some towns. We were told that the Liverpool Boys' Association believe they could use a further 15 pitches a week.

81. The surveys we have consulted do not provide data about the number of grounds with adequate dressing room and washing facilities. We have therefore had to rely on the views of those who know particular areas. The general impression is that dressing room accommodation is either non-existent or very poor. The survey undertaken for the Ministry of Housing and Local Government ⁽¹⁾ showed that in the ten new towns and the two old towns studied 46 per cent of club secretaries expressed dissatisfaction with changing facilities. In one city surveyed by the C.C.P.R. the demand for pitches in one park had fallen quite considerably between 1955-56 and 1964-65, perhaps not surprising in view of the fact that no changing facilities were available and teams were required to mark out their own pitches. Local Authorities confronted either with economy cuts or by pressure of other demands are likely to defer expenditure on changing and washing facilities.

82. The standard of satisfactory provision is not fixed for all time—it keeps pace with the standards of housing and the rising expectations stimulated by full employment and higher incomes, particularly among the young. Whereas a generation ago young men were willing to change under a hedge and travel home in their dirty jerseys and shorts, they now expect at least a hut and simple washing facilities. Looking ahead, the standards regarded as reasonable are likely to continue to rise. Moreover, with the change in social habits fresh demands are being made on Local Authorities. Sunday football is a good example. It had already developed very strongly in some areas in England before it was officially recognised by the Football Association. Since 1965 the F.A. has run a Sunday Cup Competition. It is still not officially recognised by the Association in Scotland and has only recently been so in Wales. There is every reason to believe the growth will continue in all three countries, and that the demand for pitches for Sunday football—already exceeding supply in some towns—will need the response and co-operation of Local Authorities.

83. There is also evidence of a growing demand for evening football, stimulated no doubt by the use of flood-lighting by the professional and major amateur clubs. There is scope for a good many floodlit/all weather pitches, very few of which are provided by Local Authorities at the moment.

84. Though we have not examined the situation in Scotland and Wales in the same detail, the evidence we received from responsible bodies was similar in effect. As we are required to concern ourselves with the needs and the longer term development of the game we must draw attention to these deficiencies. Their remedying would greatly add to the pleasure of the game for large numbers of players and induce many more to take part in it.

(1) *Open Space Surveys—Provision of Playing Pitches in New Towns* (Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1967).

COACHING

85. The Football Association pioneered coaching when, in 1936, it initiated coaching courses, in the first instance mainly for professional players. The scheme developed rapidly after the war with the appointment of the first Director of Coaching in any sport in Britain, the institution of Preliminary and Advanced Coaching Certificates, the publication of a Coaching Manual and the offer of visiting coaches to schools for three coaching sessions at F.A. expense. There were further developments with extended coaching services offered to universities and colleges of education; holiday coaching courses for young selected players, a special schools' week, coaching films and so on. The significant developments in England have not been paralleled in Scotland though recently there has been an increase in interest. The Scottish F.A. have arranged and subsidised training courses for intending coaches at the National Recreation Centre at Inverclyde. There is little to report from the Welsh ⁽¹⁾. The state of coaching in the three countries thus produces as discrepant a picture as almost any.

86. The effectiveness of any coaching scheme hinges on two crucial factors—the quality of the personnel and the quality of supporting administration “in the field”.

87. In 1960 the Wolfenden Committee on Sport and the Community reported: “. . . We should like to see coaching opportunities in this country improved and extended, but it is important to remember that the British system—especially the system of linking sport closely with school and education—has considerable merits”. We see no reason to differ from that view in 1968 in regard to football. It follows that a Director of Coaching (and preferably his supporting permanent coaching staff also) should combine good educational attainments and good experience of the game and be in receipt of a salary commensurate with these qualities.

88. Evidence convinces us that, at its best, the supporting county administration for coaching is excellent and, at its worst, very bad indeed, not only failing to support but even generally hindering effective work in this field. We are, however, fully persuaded of the need for some kind of regional sub-division for coaching: the smallest counties are too small to produce a viable scheme and selective coaching, almost by definition, ought to cover a larger area than a county. It is true that the county coaching at its best—in Durham for example—could very well stand alone in both extent and in the standard of facilities; but, through a regional structure, the excellence of some counties might “rub off” and be instrumental in raising the general level.

SCHOOLS

89. A well directed and well administered scheme should aim to make a substantial impact on the schools. Sound guidance and knowledge should be available in the schools as and when needed. The early F.A. scheme offered visiting coaches to schools, but this scheme has now been generally abandoned. Some schools spoke highly of it, of the enthusiasm and interest which the visits engendered as well as of the excellent personal qualities of the player-coaches. From other schools the comments were almost completely the reverse. No

⁽¹⁾ We understand a national coach has been appointed and will take up his duties in April, 1968.

doubt variations existed but, whatever a fair evaluation might turn out to be, the F.A. has discontinued the scheme on the basis that its extension to cover all the schools entitled to ask for it was financially beyond them. It follows that the basic teaching available in the schools rests solely on the teachers charged with responsibility for the game.

90. It was represented to us that the general standard of treatment in the schools left much to be desired, that, in the main, "general" teachers did little except supervise games and that specialist teachers (specialists that is in physical education) also varied tremendously, sometimes having a low level of knowledge and achievement. Two explanations were advanced to account for this:

- (i) The relative predominance of the rugby code in the grammar schools from which most schoolmasters were recruited.
- (ii) The ever widening programme of physical education which rendered it impossible for specialist teachers to reach adequate standards in all sports.

91. Virtually contradictory solutions were offered. To solve (i) it was suggested that all P.E. teachers should be required to "qualify" in soccer; to solve (ii) it was suggested that teachers should select a winter game and "qualify" only where their interests and abilities lay. We firmly support the idea of specialisation. Even if this implies that fewer teachers would be available, their quality, in the last analysis, is the more important factor.

92. Some educationalists lack awareness of just how technically knowledgeable young sportsmen nowadays are, and fail to appreciate that high levels of achievement in physical skill are, or can be, worthwhile in themselves. This is far from saying that school sport should gear its efforts to "championships" and "champions", but some young people will lose interest in and respect for it if school sport appears content to insulate its pupils from the full range of performance which sport offers. A blend is needed between the school's natural and proper desire to expose boys to a balance of experiences and the understandable desire of young people to test themselves fully in those areas where their abilities lie. This is not a problem restricted exclusively to soccer (although the playing of team games especially, as well as the existence of the professional game in soccer, serve to sharpen and intensify the problem here) but, while endorsing what the Wolfenden Committee has said and wholly supporting the growth and extension of sport in our schools, we feel bound to point out that such an extension will only be successful if it takes account of the rising standards of performance and of critical appreciation in young people today.

93. We support, therefore, the extension of coaching schemes to students in University Departments of Education, and general and specialist students in Colleges of Education. We are not urging that coaching awards should be prepared for at universities and colleges (a matter on which, as a committee, we are not qualified to judge) but simply encouraging the spread of good standard coaching knowledge to those who are interested and likely to become schoolmasters.

94. Over and above the routine coaching in schools we should like to see selective coaching developed on a substantially wider scale. For such coaching to prosper, it needs the support of headmasters and Local Authority organisers or advisers of Physical Education.

AMATEUR CLUBS

95. Most clubs exist solely for the weekly enjoyment of playing at the particular level at which the clubs concerned happen to compete. Among such clubs there are few with aspirations to devote time and energy to the improvement of individual techniques or group skills. This seems to us a fully acceptable and thoroughly healthy situation and the Committee would not wish to foster coaching where there was little or no desire for it. What we should prefer is positive reassurance that there is no substantial demand for coaching by clubs which cannot obtain it. Any substantial demand could probably not be met from the available pool of coaches. Even if sufficient coaches could be provided appropriate facilities for coaching (floodlighting, all weather surface and some indoor or covered area for fitness training) are not generally available and any plan to extend coaching at this level would need to be paralleled by their provision.

96. Coaching for youth may also be considered under this general heading, for despite an emphasis on it in the F.A. Memorandum on Coaching Policy of 1963, relatively little has been achieved. Lack of achievement is attributable to a complex of causes, but first among them appears to be the relative lack of interest of clubs, of County F.A.s and of the football community generally in promoting football for the youth age group. It is understandable that each club's concern is especially with the individual youth who already shows talent or promise of developing talent. Yet in the long run this may well be mistaken strategy. It would appear that in the immediate post-school years there is a substantial pool of "coachable ability" which is lost to the game simply because an appropriate framework of youth teams is not developed.

97. It appears to us, therefore, that for the coaching scheme of the F.A. to make any notable impact among the lower echelon of clubs or among youth, more extensive facilities for mid-week evening coaching are needed, as well as more playing opportunities for specifically youth sides in which the initiative of the County Association is an essential first step.

LEAGUE AND TOP AMATEUR TEAMS

98. The attitude to coaching in the League clubs has changed markedly in the past 20 years, from one of doubting non-commitment at best or open hostility at worst to one of substantial acceptance. No doubt many factors have contributed to this change, not least the success of teams from countries where coaching was firmly established. But the impact of the F.A. scheme itself has been considerable, either by its direct effect on players (some of whom have subsequently become managers) or by a general spread of ideas emanating from the coaching courses.

99. But, if there is now a substantial acceptance of coaching in League clubs, there is still too little appreciation of the role they could play in helping the amateur game. Some clubs now have excellent indoor training facilities and all-weather practice surfaces; indeed some clubs are most generous and make them available for selective coaching, but in other instances access for coaching has not proved possible. Quite apart from the physical use of the facilities themselves we would stress the psychological value of a closer contact between young footballers of promise and the personnel and facilities associated with the best of football in Britain.

COACHING ASSOCIATIONS

100. The strength of a coaching scheme hinges on the administrative support which it receives from the appropriate area association. Around the country in the past years a number of coaching associations have grown up. Through these associations qualified coaches and others interested in promoting coaching have come together in efforts to learn from each other and refresh their technical knowledge. They have also joined together through a feeling of isolation and a desire to examine how their skills and knowledge could be injected into the game. In our view these associations are partly symptomatic of inadequacies in football's administrative arrangements.

101. The value of coaches associating together, from time to time, for technical lectures or discussions or even for mainly social gatherings is obvious. Yet these activities, plus the quite basic and fundamental one of putting qualified people anxious to coach in touch with clubs or groups keen to be coached, could all be carried out by the same administrative machinery which serves the area's day-to-day needs in football. In this respect a coaching service is parallel to the service provided by refereeing.

SUMMARY OF COACHING NEEDS

102. To sum up, some of what needs to be done in coaching depends on changing attitudes, and, without these, the ideas which coaching seeks to put forward will not be received. In Chapter VI we recommend that the English F.A. should establish a regional network to provide certain services and give general assistance to the County F.A.'s. Organising and developing coaching schemes should be one of these services. A number of regional coaches and a national coach already qualify for some financial support through the Sports Council. With some further help of this kind we see no reason why the Association's funds should not be equal to financing an expanded scheme, and coaching we regard as a fundamental area to which the governing body of a sport should be firmly committed. The Scottish F.A. could also do more, suitably helped, but the Welsh F.A. has inadequate resources.

103. There remains the provision of facilities for coaching courses. As well as a pitch or pitches there are needed an all-weather practice area, floodlighting, and an adjacent or covered area for selected skill practices and fitness training. Such grouped facilities need not serve soccer exclusively. In some places they already exist and serve many sports (at Lilleshall and Crystal Palace for example). Some examples are also to be found in League clubs. One in each coaching region is basic to a worthwhile scheme; more could be needed, depending on the size of the region and the demand for coaching which the scheme stimulated. The same developments should also be made possible in Scotland and Wales.

CHAPTER III

THE PROFESSIONAL GAME

104. This chapter concentrates mainly on the English and Scottish Football Leagues. These two national Leagues, admittedly represent only a minute percentage of those playing and organising the game. But without doubt, they are the main focus of interest for millions of followers of the game and are of passionate concern to a considerable part of the nation. The general state of football in Britain is usually judged from the particular condition of English and Scottish League football. The tone of the game throughout its lower levels—the quality of skills aspired to, the standards of conduct on the field assumed to be normal and acceptable—is also set by the two Leagues. At the international level, Britain's comparative status in world football is established by the performance of national teams drawn from League clubs. This is the context within which we have attempted to analyse the condition of League football: looking at it closely, and in detail because its clubs are the most important in British football; yet trying to keep it within the perspective of the game as a whole.

THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

105. The Football League was formed in 1888 to provide a regulated fixture list for its twelve founder members. Today there are 92 clubs divided into four divisions. The First and Second Divisions each consist of twenty-two clubs, and the Third and Fourth Divisions each contain twenty-four clubs. Teams in each division play one another twice in a season to establish League placings. Promotion between divisions is accorded to the top four clubs of the Fourth Division and the top two clubs of the Second and Third Divisions. Relegation is inflicted upon the bottom four clubs of the Third Division and the bottom two clubs of the Second and First Divisions. The bottom four clubs of the Fourth Division must apply for re-election at the Annual General Meeting of the League.

106. League performance determines entrance to some European Cup competitions: the club at the top of the First Division (i.e. the League champions) is entitled to enter the European Champions Cup, while the second and third clubs in the First Division are entitled to enter the Inter Cities Fairs Cup. A Football League Cup Competition was introduced in 1960–61 to be played in mid-week, usually under floodlighting. This competition has proved progressively more attractive both to spectators, who enjoy the extra competition, and to clubs, who see in it extra revenue with the added attraction that the winner is entitled to enter the European Inter Cities Fairs Competition.

107. The English League programme is the most extensive national programme in the world. Teams which are successful in the various English and European Cup competitions face many additional games and so may end a season having played upwards of sixty top-level games. The strain is very

great. It can reach near breaking point if postponements and Cup commitments build up a concentration of matches at the end of a long and tiring season, a season now extended to cover 40 weeks.

THE FINANCIAL CONDITION OF CLUBS

108. League football is not a "commercial" operation in the same sense that a manufacturing or service industry is commercial; but it is subject to financial pressures like any other entertainment business. If its income does not meet its expenditure then, in the short run, it is in difficulties, and in the long run it will either have to reduce its level of operations or go out of business altogether. We propose to begin our examination of the English League by describing trends in spectator attendance and by analysing the recent financial position of League clubs. We shall then attempt to place these hard financial facts in a social context. Finally, we shall see if it is possible to deduce any general future developments from the recent and present position and whether these deductions indicate any lines along which might be found a solution of the various problems indicated.

109. The financial position of a club is determined by several factors: gate receipts in relation to operating expenses (players' wages, administration etc.); contributions from supporters clubs, sweepstakes etc.; transfer fees; and distributions from the Football League and the Football Association. We propose to look at these in turn. We must begin with the basic football operation itself—operating profitability (or non profitability) since the long term health of football as a spectator sport on any given scale depends upon a sufficient number of people being willing to pay at the gate to maintain that scale. This is not simply a question of financial viability. It would, for instance, be possible to make clubs more financially viable by pumping in more money from various ancillary and outside sources. But League football dependent primarily on non-operating income would not be healthy or desirable. Spectators are not just one of several sources of income to clubs. They are the essential and integral ingredient of a great spectator sport. League football which was financed adequately from Bingo, the Pools, Television, government grants, etc., but which was played in deserted stadia, would be a graveyard sport.

110. In the past 20 or so years club finances have been dominated by falling attendances and rising costs.

ATTENDANCES

111. Football League attendances have shown three main movements since the end of world war two: a brief post war boom, then a prolonged decline, and most recently, a slight revival. The boom covered five post war seasons from 1947-8 to 1951-2, during which period total attendances averaged about 40 million a season and hit a peak of 41.2 million in 1948-9. Thereafter, a very steady decline set in and the total had dropped to 32.5 million by 1959-60; by then League football had lost over 20 per cent of its spectators in a dozen years. However, it would be unwise to exaggerate the significance of this decline, since League attendances in the late 1950's were still at levels roughly comparable with the 28 million achieved in average pre-war seasons. It might therefore be more accurate to treat the immediate post-war boom as a temporary phenomenon indicative of the general demand for recreation and lack of alternative

provision and to treat some of the subsequent fall as a return to normality. But clearly other influences were at work for the decline persisted and, despite a rally in 1962-4, reached bottom in 1965-6 with 27.2 millions. This represented a fall of 34 per cent in under twenty years and was even below the pre-war norm. The most recent figures are slightly more encouraging. The 1966-67 season, possibly stimulated by the World Cup and mild weather showed a rise to 28.9 millions—a trend which has so far continued into the 1967-8 season, which promises attendances around 30 million.

112. Within the broad pattern of declining attendances, there have been marked differences of experience between the various levels of League football. The First Division, which attracted almost 18 million spectators in 1948-9 fell to 14 million in 1955-6 and to a low point of 12 million in 1961-2 then began to increase in popularity reaching 14.2 million in 1966-7 with probably a further million added in the current season. The Second Division fell much more precipitately from its 1947-8 peak of 12½ million before levelling out at around 7 million. The two lower divisions experienced roughly similar falls of around a third in attendances from 1947-8 but unlike the two upper divisions, they have not yet managed to halt the decline let alone enjoy any recovery. Moreover, average gates for many clubs in these divisions are very low indeed, differing little from some clubs outside the national League. Average gates in the Third Division were just under 8,000 in 1966-7 and in the Fourth Division were only 5,400. Two-thirds of the Fourth Division teams never once achieved a home gate of 10,000. Rochdale and Newport County averaged less than 3,000 per home game: in fact, Rochdale's home games for the whole 1966-7 season attracted fewer spectators (56,187) than attended many single matches in the First Division.

113. To these attendances at League matches must be added those in Cup competitions. The F.A. Cup is still a magnet, attracting some 2½ million spectators to the matches played in the Third Round and onward. The League Cup is a new money-spinner attracting 1.4 million spectators in 1966-7. Finally, the various European competitions introduced in recent years have proved great attractions. A successful run in the first two competitions can mean a very great deal financially to any club, particularly those in the lower divisions. But the European competitions and the big gates in the F.A. and League Cups benefit mostly the top clubs in the First Division.

MATCH RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE

114. Admission charges have increased quite considerably during the period. The pre-war popular admission of 1s. 0d. became 2s. 0d. after the war, was 3s. 0d. or so by 1960 and is now 4s. 6d. or 5s. 0d. at many grounds. This is more than sufficient to cover lower attendances but not enough to cover also rising costs, due to the increase of all prices and in particular the increase in players' wages. As a result the most striking feature of the period since the mid-fifties is the extent to which the operations of League clubs grew overall less profitable, and dramatically so in the Fourth Division.

115. Table 3 based on information provided by the 92 clubs shows the relationship between trends in match receipts and expenses during the period of 1955-56 to 1965-66:

TABLE 3
FOOTBALL LEAGUE CLUBS—MATCH RECEIPTS AND EXPENSES 1956-66

	Match Receipts 1956 - 1966	Team and Ground Expenses 1956 - 1966
	Percentage Increase	Percentage Increase
Division 1	+72%	+157%
" 2	+15%	+131%
" 3(a)	} +11%	} +114%
" 4(b)		

(a) Third Division (South) in 1955.
(b) Third Division (North) in 1955.

116. Only in the First Division, where attendances have fallen less precipitately, have receipts increased significantly over the eleven seasons. In the other three divisions the nominal value of match receipts has risen little, indeed, in real terms they have declined, since the value of money as measured by the Retail Price Index fell 29 per cent in the same period. Expenses, however, have increased significantly in all divisions, far in excess of the rise in prices, with a surprisingly small difference between the First and other divisions.

TABLE 4
FOOTBALL LEAGUE CLUBS—PLAYERS' EARNINGS 1955-64

League players' average earnings £											
Division	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	Percentage increase 1955-64
1	770	772	810	894	955	978	1,186	1,497	1,963	2,000	%
2	723	728	785	860	927	955	1,040	1,295	1,485	1,560	115
3(a)	680	672	735	816	843	892	943	1,060	1,350	1,386	104
4(b)	640	658	710	770	810	840	883	940	1,196	1,203	86
Average	711	713	764	841	890	923	1,026	1,216	1,523	1,559	120%
Average industrial earnings											62%

First team players' average earnings £											
Division	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	Percentage increase 1955-64
1	800	832	872	1,030	1,150	1,173	1,540	2,200	2,640	2,680	%
2	769	800	842	960	1,093	1,132	1,205	1,500	1,970	2,003	235
3(a)	720	731	784	863	918	1,034	1,130	1,300	1,450	1,475	160
4(b)	671	682	740	820	875	937	965	1,085	1,290	1,304	105
Average	740	761	809	918	1,009	1,069	1,210	1,521	1,840	1,865	148
Average industrial earnings											62%

(a) Third Division (South) up to 1958-9

(b) Third Division (North) up to 1958-9

Source: PEP Report on English Professional Football based on data from the Football League and the Professional Footballers Association.

117. Far and away the biggest factor is the increase in wages, especially since the abolition of the maximum wage in 1961. The popular view of all professional footballers earning astronomical wages is, of course, quite untrue. However, a striking increase in players' wages has certainly occurred, relatively greater than among wage earners as a whole, as can be seen from Table 4.

118. Players' earnings rose by nearly 120 per cent during this period as against an increase of around 62 per cent in average industrial earnings. As might be expected the abolition of the maximum wage favoured the better players, the average annual earnings of first team members of First Division clubs rising by £1,140 between 1961 and 1964 whereas in the Fourth Division they rose by only £339. Expenditure on wages in each of the top three divisions at least doubled and the wage bill in the Fourth Division nearly doubled⁽¹⁾ notwithstanding the smaller number of players retained by clubs.

119. A further small but not insignificant item in the rise in costs was the increase in travelling expenses in the Third and Fourth Divisions, mainly because of the conversion of the former regional into the present national league structure in 1959. In these two divisions during the decade after 1955-56, travel and accommodation costs rose from 7 per cent to 11 per cent of total match expenditure. To clubs living on the brink of bankruptcy this rise has been serious.

TABLE 5
FOOTBALL LEAGUE CLUBS
Increase in Match Receipts and Expenses 1963-66

	Match Receipts 1963-1966	Expenses etc. 1963-1966
Division 1	+ 30%	+ 15%
" 2	+ 16%	+ 22%
" 3	+ 8%	+ 14%
" 4	+ 6%	+ 9%

TABLE 6
SUMMARY OF GROSS PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNTS FOR THE THREE
SEASONS 1963-64 TO 1965-66

	Match Receipts and other Operating Income	Salaries, team and administration expenses	Gross Profits (+) or Losses (-) on League, Cup and other Matches
Division 1	11,311,000	9,932,000	+1,379,000
Division 2	5,023,000	5,811,000	- 788,000
Division 3	3,449,000	4,974,000	-1,525,000
Division 4	2,075,000	3,480,000	-1,405,000
LEAGUE TOTAL	21,858,000	24,197,000	-2,339,000

(1) P.E.P. report on English Professional Football (June 1966, p. 141.)

120. For most clubs the trend has continued of match receipts falling behind the increases in playing expenses, but nothing like as badly during the last four or five years. This is shown in Tables 5 and 6 for the period 1963-66 based on information provided by the 92 League clubs.

121. The most striking feature of the two Tables is that the First Division, taken as a whole, enjoyed a substantially greater increase in income than in expenses. (This change has occurred, ironically, in the period after the abolition of the maximum wage which had been predicted to be so damaging to the clubs employing the highest paid players). This division's operating profits, in fact, increased progressively each season and totalled more than £1¼ million over the three years. During that time its twenty-two clubs received over half of the money paid at the Football League gates.

122. Expenses continued to rise faster than match receipts in each of the other three divisions, though at a less alarming rate than over the longer period. Over the three years 1963-1966, the Second Division showed fluctuating seasonal losses totalling in all £¾ million; Divisions 3 and 4 each showed losses spiralling progressively and totalling around £1½ million for each division. The League as a whole therefore showed an overall operating loss of nearly £2½ million during those three years, despite the improved profitability of the First Division. This recent trend towards profitability at the top, with operating deficits in most of the rest of the League, will almost certainly have continued in the 1966-67 season, when attendances rose substantially in the First Division, were a little up in the Second Division and fell in the two lower divisions.

123. It should be stressed that the boundary between profits and losses does not, of course, coincide with the boundary between the First and Second Divisions. Something over half of the First Division teams usually make profits sufficiently great to more than cancel out losses by the others. Some Second Division teams make profits, but not sufficiently to compensate for the majority in their division who make losses. The same applies to the two lower divisions where a few teams, usually those involved in promotion, may make a profit. There appears to be an elite in the First Division, who often make big profits; a proletariat in the lower part of the League who normally make losses; and between them a band of teams for whom financial results will vary year by year with success on the field. Qualifications must always be made. Some communities are intrinsically more prosperous, more highly populated, even perhaps more fervent in their support than others, regardless of marginal differences of success in the football field. But the broad pattern of the top rich clubs getting more profitable and the lower poor clubs getting deeper into debt, at least on their football operations, appears to be formidably and remorselessly established.

124. So far, we have been examining just the operating profitability of football, which must, for the reasons given earlier, be the core of our financial analysis. However, there are additional sources of revenue to League clubs, other than gate receipts. These may, for convenience, be fitted into two categories. Firstly, income (other than gate money), which is stimulated by the clubs themselves and varies in amount from one club to another, i.e. supporters and development clubs' contributions and sweepstakes and other competitions run by them or the club, and transfer fees. Secondly, income arriving from sources not intrinsic to the clubs themselves, mainly from the Football Association and the Football League.

MISCELLANEOUS INCOME (INCLUDING SUPPORTERS' CLUB CONTRIBUTIONS)

125. Most clubs obtain a good deal of money from the operation of sweepstakes, bingo, raffles, and a variety of "gambling" devices. These are sometimes run by the club or a body directly under its control, but more often they are run by the Supporters' club. From the published accounts (which by no means tell the full story) income of this kind totalled £4½ million and provided over 90 per cent of all additional funds to League clubs in 1963–1966. Its significance varied in different leagues. It was least important, absolutely and relatively, in the First Division. In the Third Division, however, it compensated for some 80 per cent of gross operating deficits in 1963–1966 and for roughly two-thirds of such deficits in the Fourth Division. Indeed, these two lower divisions, where team and administrative expenses and wages alone exceed total gate receipts, could not have been sustained without money from this source. The total in the Third and Fourth Divisions during these three seasons alone was £2½ million as against gate receipts of some £5 million. In other words, Supporters' clubs, bingo etc. contributed in the ratio of nearly £1 to every £2 taken at the gate. In addition such clubs may make contributions to the well-being of their football clubs which do not appear in the accounts, e.g. the improving of terracing and ground facilities.

126. The importance of Supporters' clubs for the financial survival of the lower division clubs, quite apart from their social role in canalising the deep attachment which many supporters feel for their local clubs, cannot be exaggerated. It is most disturbing, therefore, that these contributions were on a slightly declining trend in Divisions 2, 3 and 4 during 1963–66. Should this trend ever become more pronounced, the financial viability of many of the lower clubs would be in serious doubt.

TRANSFER FEE RECEIPTS

127. Receipts from transfer fees can make a pronounced difference to the financial situation of an individual club—as for instance, when Huddersfield transferred Denis Law. However, it needs stressing that in recent years transfer fees have not been of financial benefit to the English League. The accounts for the period 1963–66 show that the League as a whole made a net loss in each of those seasons, totalling £983,000 in all.⁽¹⁾ Each Division in the League made a loss in transfers during the period 1963–66 as a whole, although occasionally an individual Division made a small profit in one season. The transfer deficit was greatest in Division 2 (£487,000), though it was substantial, and presumably hardest to bear, in Division 4 (£105,000).

128. Many of our witnesses were apparently under the impression that the transfer system is beneficial to the poorer clubs in the League. There appears to be an assumption, perhaps based on earlier experience, that the smaller clubs survive by developing young players and selling them to the richer clubs. Figures do not support this view. Recent experience is analysed in Chapter IV. This analysis shows that the transfer system is an added burden on the smaller clubs taken as a whole. The main beneficiaries lie outside the Football League, particularly in Scotland and Ireland. To this extent, therefore, the transfer

⁽¹⁾ This is much larger than the figure in Chapter IV Paragraph 274 (i) following Table 10, because it covers a longer period, club accounts include items not normally included in the transfer fee, and are not all for the same financial year.

system does not exactly "keep money circulating within the Football League", as many people appear to believe. It only achieves this purpose in so far as it reduces the amount of corporation tax payable by the profitable clubs.

129. Transfer fees are treated by the Inland Revenue as income or expenditure for the purpose of assessment for Corporation Tax. Payment of a large fee by a profitable club will reduce its tax liability and only increase the tax liability of the recipient club if it too is profitable. There is reason to believe that the tax position has been a factor in the enormous increase in transfer fees in recent years since it may encourage profitable clubs not merely to acquire players but to pay higher fees for them. Equally it reduces their desire to transfer players to other clubs, for in effect it reduces the money they receive for them by 40 per cent to 42½ per cent, depending on the rate of tax. We discuss this matter further in Chapter IV.

INCOME FROM THE GOVERNING BODIES

130. League clubs receive contributions from both the Football Association and the Football League. Payments by the former are in respect of participation in the F.A. Challenge Cup. In all cup ties played in the third round proper and subsequent rounds, a percentage of the net gate receipts is paid into a pool (32 per cent in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth rounds and 25 per cent in the semi finals and final). The pool is divided equally among the Football League clubs⁽¹⁾ which entered the competition, in other words all the 92, irrespective of the progress they made in the competition. In the 1966-67 competition the pool amounted to £290,000 which resulted in a payment of some £3,000 to each League club, rich or poor.

131. The Football League makes three kinds of contributions based on the source of the revenue:

- (i) 20 per cent of the net gate receipts of all matches played in the League Cup are pooled and divided equally amongst all clubs taking part in the competition; nowadays all the 92 clubs. This yielded a total of £60,605 in the 1966-67 competition.
- (ii) A levy of 4 per cent on the net gate, stand and season ticket receipts of all League, League Cup and European Cup matches is paid into a pool, to which is added moneys received by the League for the televising or broadcasting of League matches. In 1966-67 the former amounted to £295,000 and the latter to £70,000. This pool is shared equally among the 92 clubs. It is thus a method of redistributing income between the clubs which have large home gates and those with small home gates.
- (iii) The payment made by the Pool Promoters Association and other Pools for the right to use the League fixture lists was substantially increased by the 1964 agreement with the Pool Promoters Association. The League's accounts for 1966-67 show receipts of over £600,000 from fees for the reproduction of its fixture lists.⁽²⁾ Out of this is paid the contributions to the Provident Fund and the Players' Personal

(1) In the event of a non-Football League club surviving the second round proper it in effect receives 48%, not 32%, of the net gate receipts but does not get a share of the pool.

(2) In 1966-67 the Football League paid £1,225 to the Southern League for the use of that League's fixtures when there were insufficient English and Scottish League matches to fill the pools' coupon.

Accident Insurance Scheme and the fees of all referees and linesmen, payments which would otherwise have to be made by the individual League clubs. In 1966-67 these three items amounted to £300,000. The benefits of these payments, though substantial, do not appear in the accounts of the individual clubs. In addition the League pays into the 4 per cent levy pool 3d. for each spectator during the season, totalling £361,000 in 1966-67. The administrative expenses of the League too come mainly from this source and Corporation Tax is payable on the balance after these items have been taken into account.

132. The total of the three kinds of contribution from the Football League in 1966-67 was £787,000. If the F.A. Cup pool is added the total amount for equal distribution was £1,076,000 or over £11,000 per club. This is startlingly higher than the average annual amount received by clubs from these sources in the three years 1963-66. The increase reflects the increased money from the Pools and Television and rising attendances. To this direct contribution must be added the costs clubs are saved in respect of items now met by the League out of its Pools money, e.g. the fees of referees and linesmen.

TAXATION

133. Until recently, and especially in the period after the remission of the entertainment duty on gate money, taxation has not been a major drain on football finance. But three recent developments have increased the taxation burden. Football clubs have suffered increases in rates, now assessed on an industrial rather than an amenity basis. They have felt the full force of the Selective Employment Tax. And finally, as some successful clubs make larger profits, the amount paid in Corporation Tax rises, reaching £259,000 in 1965-6 from the First Division. In the same year the Football League Ltd., paid £32,000 and the Football Association £10,000. It may be assumed that, even allowing for higher payments for transfers, the tax outflow will continue to rise with the prosperity of the big clubs.

THE GENERAL FINANCIAL SITUATION

134. We can now summarize the current financial situation of Football League clubs. The League as a whole has suffered, at least until last season, markedly declining attendances and overall losses. Within that general picture there have been differing experiences. Taking the period 1964-66, the First Division showed a profit of about £1½ million from its matches (though only about half of the clubs in the Division showed a profit). It paid out substantially more than it received in transfers and also stood in net deficit to the governing bodies of the game, but these outgoings did not eliminate the operating profits of the Division, which were further supplemented by contributions from Supporters' Clubs. Even after taxation the First Division showed a profit of £922,000 most of which occurred in 1965-6. The Second and Third Divisions made a loss on their matches but this was turned into a surplus after receipt of additional contributions (from Supporters' Clubs, the Football Association and the Football League), but went into deficit again after deducting the loss on transfer fees. The Fourth Division made a large loss on its matches and remained in deficit even after receiving large contributions from its Supporters' Clubs and the two governing bodies. The situation was usually worsened by net transfer fee payments.

135. In 1966, the accumulated losses of the Fourth Division totalled £518,000 having doubled since 1963. Accumulated losses in the Third Division totalled £260,000 and in the Second Division £140,000. The First Division, on the other hand, had accumulated surpluses of nearly £1.7 million. Ominously, clubs were in financial debt in inverse ratio to their likely capacity, in terms of playing success, to pay it off.

136. Notwithstanding this generally gloomy financial picture the League clubs as a whole were paying substantial sums in Corporation Tax and, since 1966, in the Selective Employment Tax.

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

137. This financial deterioration has taken place during a period when the general standard of play has reached a very high level. The explanation therefore lies not there but more probably in the radical changes which have been taking place in the social pattern and in people's attitudes and leisure activities. Originally Saturday afternoon football, watched from usually primitive spectator facilities, was an entertainment geared to an essentially working class audience, predominantly male, many of whom ceased work at Saturday lunch-time, and then went to watch the local football team. Since then the work, leisure and family behaviour patterns of our society have greatly changed. Sports participation has increased, watching sport has declined.

138. In the larger towns the potential spectators are now more scattered, living in the newly built suburbs and municipal housing estates away from the centre of the town. The spreading of the five day week has given them greater leisure and the internal combustion engine has given them greater mobility. If there are a number of League clubs in the area they are freer now to patronise the more successful and more attractive playing side.

139. Standards of cleanliness and comfort in the house—and expectations of them outside—have risen. Many British football stadia were built generations ago when standards of comfort were much below what they are today. The bulk of accommodation is still for standing—a large part in the open—hardly ideal for a winter game. Refreshment and toilet facilities have fallen behind rising standards; few clubs have possessed the large sums of money necessary to provide satisfactory modern facilities. It is significant, though not surprising, that a Survey carried out by National Opinion Polls Ltd. for the *Daily Mail* in December 1966⁽¹⁾ showed that a high proportion of football supporters interviewed gave cold and wet weather and lack of seating, covered stands and good toilet facilities as their main reasons for not attending more often.

140. The range of leisure opportunities with which football must compete for people's spare time has greatly expanded. Television, especially, has made a major, though complex, impact. It offers the public great quantities of sport, in the comfort of their own home. The N.O.P. Survey showed that 44 per cent of the population aged 16 and over watch football on television at least once a week. This understandably lessens the impulse to see the game live, especially if it is provided in bad weather and uncomfortable surroundings. Television also brings the very best of national and international football into the home, which may well weaken the desire to go and watch the less talented local side.

(1) English Professional Football—National Opinion Polls, Ltd. for the *Daily Mail*, January 1967.

Indeed the very sense of local identity, which has been part of the passion of soccer supporters, is eroded by the standardisation of national life, in which television and greater mobility of the population have played their part. On the other hand, television has exposed a greater percentage of the population—especially women—to the excitement of football. The World Cup (watched on television by 85 per cent of the population aged 16 and over) is a clear example of how televising good football can attract new sources of support for the game. On balance, however, television and especially televised football and other sport is a major competitor for people's leisure time. The Survey revealed it to be the major reason why many people did not attend matches.

141. Out of this pressure of rising costs, falling average attendances and changing social habits has emerged a small number of clubs which have managed to maintain or increase their attendances, which tend to dominate the football honours in terms of playing success, and which are therefore generally highly and increasingly successful in financial terms. What explains this development? What is the secret of this success in a generally difficult market?

142. The most important feature is situation in large population areas. Take first of all success in terms of attracting crowds. In 1966-67 the top 10 home gate drawers in the League were, in order:—Manchester United, Liverpool, Everton, Tottenham Hotspur, Chelsea, Leeds, Newcastle United, Arsenal, Sunderland and Nottingham Forest. All are in large population centres. All are in the First Division. Looking back to the previous season, we find that 9 of the same teams also then figured in the top 10 measured by size of home gates. The only change was that Manchester City was then 10th, whereas the following season it fell to 11th after Nottingham Forest (although Manchester City gates, in fact, improved). In 1966-67 the two Liverpool and the two Manchester clubs altogether attracted over 3½ million people to their home games, a quarter of all First Division attendances and more than the entire 24 clubs in the Fourth Division attracted in that season.

143. Looking now at playing success, the most successful clubs in terms of appearances in the top 10 in the First Division in the past 20 years are:—Manchester United (19 times), Burnley (16 times), Arsenal (14 times), Tottenham (13 times), Wolverhampton (13 times), Blackpool (10 times), West Bromwich (9 times), Aston Villa (7 times), Liverpool (7 times), and Bolton (7 times). Again most of these are in large population centres, eight being in the great conurbations of Merseyside, South East Lancashire, Birmingham and London. One of the two exceptions, Blackpool, earned most of its success in the earlier decade and has since shown signs of decline, while Burnley remains a phenomenon, perhaps explicable in terms of superb management. In contrast, Accrington, which recently had to resign from the League was, significantly, one of the few League clubs based on an immediate population of below 40,000.

144. To be situated in a large population centre is not, of course, sufficient in itself to guarantee success, as is clear from the recent experiences of the Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol and Cardiff clubs. It is possible to have a large population upon which to draw but to be relatively unsuccessful and to draw small crowds. Nor do the large population centres guarantee even moderate success for all the clubs within them. The tendency seems to be for a few successful clubs to emerge at the heart of the conurbation and for other clubs in the area to suffer by the comparison. Life can then be much harder for, say, Oldham, Rochdale

and Stockport in the shadow of the two Manchester clubs than for, say, Swindon with no First Division club within 50 miles of it. It is also noticeable that the clubs which have had short spells in the First Division since the end of the war have mainly come from these "isolated" population centres, e.g. Cardiff, Ipswich, Luton, Northampton, Southampton and Stoke. Finally it is obvious that the fervour for football varies from area to area. Some areas are more passionate in their support than others, in the sense that an above average percentage of the population (however defined and qualified) turn out to cheer, come success, come failure. The degree of intensity of support can and does alter. Continually bad or good performances by a local club over a long period may permanently alienate or permanently captivate a local population.

145. To stress this factor of population is not to belittle the importance of two other factors—management and team performance. Variation in the quality of club management will effect playing success, whatever the club's effective population area. There are many examples of clubs responding dramatically to change in management. Nottingham Forest, Manchester City, Ipswich, Northampton, Coventry, Stockport and Southend are just a few instances where improved management quickly and beneficially changed the fortunes of the clubs concerned, at least temporarily. It is also obvious that the more successful the team the larger the gates it will attract.

146. But having said all this it is still true that the able manager of a club in a relatively small community is working within and against limits which tend to restrict his ultimate success, either keeping him from the utmost heights or as in the case of Ipswich and Northampton allowing him only a temporary sojourn there.

147. The influence of good management and team success do not in any way contradict the views that some clubs are destined to be "small" and there is a greater probability and predictability of others being of consistently higher calibre and more successful financially. Large regular home gates lead to financial prosperity. Most of the costs of running a club are fixed, they do not vary with the size of the crowd. There is a break-even point beyond which all further admissions are almost pure profit. For a First Division club with a large and highly paid list of professionals the break-even point may be an average home gate of 25,000–35,000, for a Third Division club it may be 6,000–7,000. If attendances fall below this point the club runs short of money, better attendances than this give it cash to spare—for ground improvements, for attracting better players, for building up a reserve against a rainy day.

148. If a Third Division club by excellent management and attractive play pushes its average home gates up from, say, 6,000 to 10,000 it becomes prosperous. But only at that level. Should its play gain it promotion to the Second Division its wage bill is likely to increase substantially and before long it may find it needs to acquire two or three better and expensive players. Its receipts from away games will increase but clubs live on their home gates. If the population from which the club can draw regular support, say within 10–15 miles of the ground, is small, it is unlikely to increase its home gates much. Indeed if it finds it more difficult to be as successful in the better class football, home attendances may even fall.

149. The tendency of the large population centres to dominate top level football has been emphasised by the abolition of the maximum wage and the

increase in transfer fees. Only clubs which can attract large regular audiences can afford to pay the salaries and fringe benefits (such as housing) which the best players can now demand—just as only the same few clubs can afford to pay the transfer fees necessary to obtain the best players from other clubs, and again only the same few can afford the vast scouting systems which ensure that an increasing number of the best youngsters now start their careers with these big clubs. So for some time the tendency has been for the best playing talent to flow to a few already successful clubs, thus guaranteeing their continuing success. Young footballers of great talent are most likely either to be discovered from the start by, or to be personally attracted to, or quite early in their careers be bought by, and then through the peak performance of their careers be retained by, one of the few clubs which can afford almost any price to find, buy and pay them.

150. The concentration of higher playing talent in certain clubs widens the differences in the quality of entertainment provided between the top and lower clubs. Spectators have been able to respond to these differences in quality because of the increase in their own personal affluence and their private transport (over half of League football spectators now travel to games in private transport). Given the money, the transport, and Saturdays free for longer journeys, spectators can and do travel further than their nearest club to see the best football available. The N.O.P. Survey already quoted found that 13 per cent of spectators travelled twenty-five miles or more to see a game.

IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND REMEDIES

151. The picture we have described, in terms of the current financial situation and of the broader social forces at work, is complex. It is not possible to say simply that English League football is in a good or bad condition, that its outlook is rosy or bleak. There are a number of quite different conditions, some apparently very rosy, some rather grey, and some very black. For the various reasons set out earlier in this chapter—the distribution and concentration of population, the abolition of the maximum wage, the inflation of transfer fees, the development of large scouting systems, the growth of personal affluence and private transport, the demand for the highest quality amenities, the impact of television, and the introduction of new European competitions which concern and reward only the top clubs—quite distinct classes have developed within the Football League. The League is only theoretically composed of ninety-two equal clubs. In practice it has an established plutocracy, a middle class who normally just manage to keep their heads above water, and a large proletariat living in nearly permanent poverty. Admittedly the boundaries between the football middle class and the classes above and below may be fluid and blurred. Exceptionally good management or quirks of good fortune may also help some of the proletariat to above-average achievements. But in general, the pattern of relative success is well established. All of the influences outlined above reinforce them, tending to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. What we are witnessing is a circular process, in which success tends to perpetuate success, and membership of a lower division to make continued membership of a lower division more likely.

152. What of the future? What do these social trends and financial realities mean for the development of English League football over the next few decades?

Clearly no committee can speak with absolute confidence about the future; one very difficult problem is to distinguish the temporary from the permanent in current trends. But we do feel it is possible to conclude that the present pattern of English League football is unlikely for much longer to remain appropriate. Some League clubs, for example, must, if they wish to survive, cut their coats according to the cloth now available to them—which is either changed or more restricted than it once was. How long can some of the smaller clubs continue to accumulate losses at the present rate? Already many of these clubs are almost totally dependent upon the contributions from Supporters' Clubs and minor forms of gambling to keep them going, even at their present rate of loss. Should this source diminish, or fail to rise at the same rate as costs, their position will quickly become very tenuous. If these clubs continue to incur losses at the present rate or at an increased rate, one must ask who will take responsibility for the accumulated deficits in, say, a decade's time, or even less? Is it possible for them to remain in existence or will there be increasing insolvency? Can they improve their income? Can they reduce expenditure?

153. But the recent social and financial trends we have described are not inevitably and wholly threatening and harmful to all League clubs. On the contrary, the increase in leisure time available to the community and the pronounced increase in consumer expenditure on leisure activities presents a great opportunity to football, which is one of the most—if not the most—popular and exciting of all leisure pursuits. It has been estimated that expenditure on entertainment will have doubled between 1960 and 1975⁽¹⁾. This will present both an opportunity and a challenge. Those areas of the game which can maintain or increase their share of this rising leisure expenditure will clearly enjoy increasing prosperity. But to do this they must successfully compete with alternative forms of entertainment. And to do so they must adjust to changing consumer tastes. On the face of it, given its inherent excitement and entertainment value football starts with many advantages; but there is no divine guarantee that it will get its due share of consumer expenditure regardless of its own efforts.

154. We shall now consider certain developments which might resolve or ameliorate some of the League's financial problems and enable it to adjust to the new social environment and to exploit the great new opportunities which lie before it. They involve changes in the structure of the League; changes in the timing of football to meet the changed pattern of recreation in the community; possible amalgamations of clubs and improvements in facilities to meet the different expectations of newer generations of supporters. Discussion of this last point will also raise the basic point, whether it is not just improvements, but a change in the nature of the football club which is under consideration—either towards great entertainment centres or towards smaller community social centres.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE LEAGUE

155. No other major footballing country in the world has as many as four national league divisions, with as many as twenty-two or twenty-four clubs in each. The present pattern has three main disadvantages.

156. First, the fixture list for the top clubs is too heavy. These often find themselves with a heavy burden of accumulated league and cup fixtures in the

⁽¹⁾ *The British Economy in 1975* by W. Beckerman and Associates (1965) p. 197.

late season. The development of European competitions and of the new English League Cup, has made this situation more acute, especially if a harsh winter causes postponements. English league clubs which reach advanced stages of European competitions are consequently often at a severe disadvantage compared with their European opponents because of the overloading of their late season commitments.

157. Second, competition slackens or disappears for a number of clubs as the season progresses. Championship and promotion honours ultimately concern only eleven teams and relegation and re-election affect twelve. Even though other clubs are involved with promotion and championship hopes and relegation fears, it is still the case that as the season wears on an increasing number of clubs are not seriously involved in either zone and so have less to play for. This affects players and spectators alike and crowds suffer accordingly. Spectators like competition, as is demonstrated by the way in which it is often financially better to be competing for honours in the Second Division than to be coasting along without hope in the lower half of the First Division. From the point of view of finance and of interest and pleasure in the league game, it would be advantageous to increase the number of promotion and relegation places.

158. Third, the Fourth Division as a whole, is making heavy and increasing losses on its football operations, so raising doubts about its future. The question arises of whether the lower part of the League can be changed to improve the financial situation of the clubs within it and provide a better chance of their continuance. In this context, two particular forms of expense demand examination: the heavy wage bill of a large professional playing staff, and the heavy travel and accommodation expenses arising from playing in a national league. Wages and staff are dealt with in paras. 117–118. As for travel and accommodation, clearly for Torquay to visit Barrow and Southend to visit Workington, or *vice versa*, is a heavy burden for which attendances at that level of football do not compensate. Indeed there is almost certainly a crowd penalty in playing distant teams, since these games lack the extra attractiveness of local "Derbys". Significantly, in the 1966–67 season, Southend United made a "loss" (i.e. in the sense that its share of the gate receipts failed to cover travelling and accommodation expenses) when visiting (9) Northern teams. But every visit to another Southern club made a "profit". National status is an honour for which the lower divisions clearly pay a price, and perhaps a disproportionately heavy one.

159. On several occasions in recent years the Management Committee of the League has proposed changes in "the pattern of football" but the proposals have never secured the necessary three-quarters voting majority. In 1964 it proposed the addition of 8 clubs to the present 92, the resulting 100 being grouped into 5 divisions of 20 clubs of which the bottom two would be North and South Regions. Between the top three divisions the rule would be four up and four down and four would go down from the Third and be replaced by the top two from the two regional divisions.

160. There is a very great deal to be said in favour of this particular proposal. We strongly support:

- (i) bringing in six to ten more clubs. Judging from the applications for election to the League during the past 10 years, the extension could be made without lowering standards of play and ground facilities and would be of benefit to the professional game. Indeed, if the standard of

the smaller professional clubs continues to rise, a case might later be made out for a greater expansion of the League, providing the lower divisions were regionalised. At first glance our support may appear at variance with the fears we have already expressed about the future financial viability of some of the Fourth Division clubs. We are assuming, however, that they will heed the advice given in paragraphs 163-164 below and cut down their wages bills. The increase would also enable clubs in new and developing areas of population to be brought in and so redress the present emphasis on the old centres of population.

- (ii) the principle of four up and four down. It would increase the number of awards for continuing good play and widen the competitive element in each division. This is a matter of incentives, of sticks and carrots to the players and excitement to the spectators.
- (iii) the establishment of two divisions below the Third on a North and South basis. We appreciate that, at any one time, there may not be an equal number of clubs clearly northern or clearly southern and that as in the years before 1958 some "midland" clubs might find themselves in one or other regional division to make up the balance. Nevertheless there would still be substantial gains for the reasons we have just given.

161. We are, however, not convinced of the merits of each division being the same size—20 clubs in each. The better clubs are likely to have many more matches outside the League programme than the clubs in the lower divisions. We think a strong case can be made out for a First Division consisting of 18 clubs. This would not be the creation of a super-league, the super-league is already there in the small number of clubs which in terms of honours and financial success have dominated English football in the last 20 years. Out of these clubs are likely to come our best representatives in the European competitions and the finalists in both the F.A. and the League Cups. The claims of international competition on these clubs, possibly by way of a British or European League, are likely to increase and a reduction in their heavy league programme would allow them some elbow room in which to do more justice to their European and other top level commitments. If the bottom four were replaced each season by the top four in the Second Division the apparent disparity between the two would be lessened.

162. We feel less confident about the size of the other four divisions. We are inclined to think that 18 in the Second, 20 in the Third, and 22 in each of the North and South would make sense in the long run. But 20 in each of the four other Divisions in a League of 98 clubs or 20 each in the Second and Third and 22 each in the other two making a League of 102 could also be defended.

163. To summarize we recommend that:

- (i) the size of the League be increased to include 6-10 of the better professional non-league clubs;
- (ii) there should be five divisions, the top three on a national basis, the remaining clubs to be divided into North and South divisions;
- (iii) at the end of each season the bottom four clubs in the first three divisions should be relegated and the top four clubs (the top two in each of the two regional divisions) be promoted. The bottom two in the North and South Divisions would have to stand for re-election but would not be

re-elected if they were in the bottom two in more than two seasons consecutively;

- (iv) the First Division should be reduced to 18 clubs;
- (v) the size of the other four divisions should be either 18, 20, and two 22's, or four 20's or some similar figures having regard to the length of the season, and the financial effects of having 20 or 22 clubs in one division.

PLAYING STAFFS AND EXPENSES

164. The major element in club expenses is wages of players. The abolition of the maximum wage and the change in the retention system have reduced the number of professionals employed by the 92 League clubs from 3,022 in the 1960-61 season to 2,395 in 1966-67, or by one-fifth. This reduction has been offset by an increase of 372 Apprentices. The decrease in the number of professionals was much smaller in the Third and Fourth Divisions than in the other two and their use of Apprentices was correspondingly less. In 1966-67 the average number of professionals employed per club was 30 in the First Division, 26 in the Second, 25 in the Third and 24 in the Fourth. The Fourth Division's total wage bill in the 3 years 1963-66 was £2.4 million—nearly half that of the First Division, though its income from gates was less than one-fifth.

165. There have been suggestions that a maximum wage should be fixed, not overall, but for each division. We do not favour such a course nor do we think it is practicable. Wages have now found their competitive level in each division and, in general, are not out of keeping with the skills required, the risks involved and the general level of earnings. Nevertheless we doubt whether the less successful clubs in the lower divisions can go on much longer maintaining the number of full-time professionals at present wage levels. We are bound to ask whether many should not carry much smaller full-time and more part-time professional staffs. This might involve cutting down on their match programme, but it would reduce expenses to a level appropriate to their status and financial position. It might also encourage many other players to aspire to this level of football without having to sacrifice their main careers—an increasing consideration as a larger proportion of our youth goes into higher education. A small part-time professional staff would seem even more appropriate if the clubs concerned were competing in regional leagues, for the lure of national status and the myth that all clubs should try to run on the same lines as, say, the Arsenal would have even less formal foundation.

SUNDAY AND SUMMER FOOTBALL

166. The proper timing of League football is a question which has frequently been put to us—is, for instance, Saturday still the best day for games, or does Sunday football fit in better with the emerging pattern of weekend leisure activity? The case for a change to Sunday is undoubtedly strong. At present Saturday afternoon is crammed with conflicting pressures on leisure time: most shopping, playing of sport and watching televised sport takes place then. Sunday, by contrast, is relatively free. Two arguments are normally put forward against Sunday football: that British fans prefer a quiet day of rest to a Continental style Sunday, and that public transport services are inadequate on Sundays. Neither of these arguments stands up completely to examination. The N.O.P. Survey found that three-quarters of those interviewed approved of professional

sport taking place on Sundays, and that the rate of approval had risen rapidly in recent years. Opposition was mainly from the over-55 age group—a diminishing minority. In fact, of course, Sunday is already football day for thousands of amateur players. Since the change in rules permitting Sunday football clubs within the Football Association there has been a dramatic growth in Sunday football leagues. With county cricket also now played on a Sunday (without charge at the gate), it is increasingly becoming a day of sport—though some minority bodies will presumably oppose any further extension, especially if it involves paid professionals.

167. The problem of transport, strongly put to us by the Football League, is fortunately less a question of principle or prejudice. It is certainly the case that ordinary public transport is considerably less frequent on Sunday, and staff shortages make this deficiency difficult to remedy. However, the prospect of high utilisation and highly profitable contracts for special football services should make provision attractive to either public or private undertakings. It should also be pointed out that already over a half of football spectators travel by private transport, mainly private cars (as against only 31 per cent using public transport), and this proportion continues to rise. Consequently the problem of Sunday public transport to the game, though a real one, need not be a decisive or insuperable obstacle to change.

168. Regardless of whether professional football is played on Saturdays or Sundays, it has also been proposed that the season should be extended into the summer, allowing a break in mid-winter when conditions can be appalling for spectators and players alike. The World Cup, played in July 1966, demonstrated to millions of Britons that summer (admittedly in this case a cool one, but not exceptionally so) is perfectly suitable for the game. Summer would also be very suitable for the increasing number of mid-week evening games: many people who are reluctant to leave home in the cold or dark of night will enjoy doing so on a mild light summer evening. Some developments in this direction have already occurred. The League programme will in future start at the beginning of August and the home international games will be played in the early part of May. However, we should record that nobody presented to us convincing arguments or statistics to prove that the game suffers a serious lack of support in mid-winter. Nor did people appear to feel passionately about this question: indeed, some people involved in running clubs suggested that the summer break was precious to their peace of mind and already small enough.

169. Of these two issues, Sunday and summer football, the former is in our view the more important, as perhaps involving some financial benefit to the game—though the advantage is at present hypothetical. Sunday professional football also involves a question of principle: i.e. whether the hostility of a declining minority should still be backed with the same legislative sanctions as when their attitudes were more dominant. Times, popular wishes, attitudes and prejudices have changed: the statute book has become out of date. It has been argued that whether or not League clubs ultimately choose to play on Sundays or on other days, and spectators to pay and watch, they should at least have the free choice. We share this view and would support the necessary amendments of existing legislation concerning recreation on Sundays. We would hope that the Football League would then experiment with Sunday games, especially to determine if they produced even the marginal financial benefits so necessary to

smaller clubs at present struggling to make ends meet. We would expect that different areas would produce different responses to Sunday football (as has been the case with Friday evening football). The advantage of experiment and flexibility is that it would allow clubs to find out for themselves whether their supporters preferred Saturday or Sunday (or Friday) football.

AMALGAMATION OF CLUBS

170. One aspect of football rationalisation which is often raised—and which we believe will become of greater importance as the financial and social trends outlined above gather pace—is the amalgamation of certain clubs in close proximity. The Bradford, Bristol, Nottingham and some Lancashire, Yorkshire and West London clubs are cited as clubs that might benefit from amalgamation. The main advantages are usually seen to be a more intensive use of facilities and the concentration of crowd support on one club. But the immediate financial benefits of amalgamation may not be quite as big as is sometimes thought. Certainly many expenses could be cut. But it would be over-optimistic to assume that receipts for the amalgamated clubs would rise to an amalgamation of existing gates, since clubs in the same locality usually play on different Saturdays anyway. Nor is there such direct competition for gates as may at first appear, and some local enthusiasts watch both clubs. Despite these qualifications, serious consideration in suitable areas needs to be given to either amalgamation or close working relations between clubs if they are to be in a position to take advantage of future opportunities.

171. Amalgamations can be one means of raising the quality of football entertainment and of taking positive advantage of the growing demand for high quality recreational facilities. We are saying not only that the two Bradford clubs, for instance, may have to amalgamate if one of them is not to go out of existence, but that an amalgamation which provided the opportunity of improving the standard of team players and of ground facilities could produce a single top quality club in the 1970's worthy of this city. The same is true in other areas. The process will not be rapid, nor on a large scale, but where it is appropriate it should be encouraged rather than resisted. It will be sad to see a few of the old football names fade out, but assuming that the amalgamation is of clubs in proximity, this will not mean that their locality is deprived of League football. On the contrary, it may mean that a much higher quality of football entertainment will be available locally. Moreover, amalgamations may provide the opportunity for some changes in the geographical location of League football clubs to adjust to the population and economic changes which have occurred in this century. A look at the map of League clubs shows an excessive concentration in certain static or declining industrial and population areas, especially in the north of England. New communities have developed, particularly in southern England, but also, for instance, in the Midlands, which lack clubs in League membership. Amalgamations of old clubs would provide vacancies for new clubs to enter the League. Alternatively the movement of established clubs to new communities could provide a way both of saving old clubs and at the same time bringing League football to new and growing areas.

172. Instead of amalgamating, two adjacent clubs may find it profitable to share a common ground. One ground may be sold for a substantial building

development and the money used towards providing a single first class stadium for the area, with a subsidiary ground for training and minor matches. This kind of arrangement is found abroad: both Munich clubs use the same stadium and three Mexican clubs have combined to build the magnificent new stadium in Mexico City. This approach seems particularly appropriate where (as in Munich) a local authority has built the stadium and rents it to the clubs—usually for 10 or 15 per cent of gate receipts.

FACILITIES

173. The subject of football facilities has cropped up frequently in our investigations. Most English League clubs have playing and spectator facilities which were built in an earlier age when standards were lower than today. Consequently, though much money has been spent on them in recent years, these facilities are deficient in many ways. Only a few clubs are sufficiently profitable to raise money for ground improvements and the present treatment of such expenditure for tax purposes is probably inhibiting anyhow. Yet it can be argued from the evidence cited earlier, that unless they are improved many people will refrain from going to watch football. So there appears to be a vicious circle. Admittedly a number of witnesses to this Committee, involved in running the game, expressed the view that too much emphasis should not be put on the need for better facilities. They rightly pointed out that comfortable facilities will rarely attract people to watch bad football from an unsuccessful team and better facilities alone will not solve football's problems. But some witnesses went further and implied that most people were not affected by the quality of facilities. We reject this view (which is not infrequently held by people whose eminence ensures them of privileged facilities at any game).

174. As people's expectation of comfort rises, and as comfort in their own homes increases, it is natural that the highest comfort will be expected in leisure pursuits. Public houses and cinemas provide present day examples where a marked upgrading in recreational facilities has been necessary to retain custom. The N.O.P. Survey came to the conclusion that "many people are deterred from watching by wet and cold conditions", and the Survey indicates strongly that until the clubs do more to provide comfortable facilities for spectators, larger crowds will not be won back. The Survey indicates that the most effective improvement would be the provision of more covered stands, though there is also a demand for greater seating capacity, and for facilities for seat booking in advance. The Survey done by Garland-Compton Ltd. for the Football League in 1962 reached similar conclusions: bad spectator facilities and inadequate parking "helps to drive many attenders away from football".⁽¹⁾

175. The supply and provision of higher quality entertainment can create new and greater demand which far outweighs any resistance to higher prices. The old argument that demand will create supply is not helpful in this case. For a start, unperceptive football managements may not see and respond to a new demand as it grows. Above all this argument does not take account of the fact that supply of something different, in terms of high quality entertainment facilities, may activate a latent or create a wholly new demand. The question which the management must ask is—what will the customer buy?

⁽¹⁾ *Football League Research*, 1962, page 4.

176. Women provide a major and largely untapped potential source of support. Roughly one-third of all women declare an interest in football, but less than one in ten attend matches. As the trend towards families spending their weekends together grows more pronounced, so the possibility increases of converting women who are interested in football into actual supporters who will attend matches with their husbands. But this conversion will clearly depend upon providing the kind of comfort which women appreciate and which husbands expect for their wives and boys for their girl friends. If the facilities are not provided, and women are not attracted, the danger is that women will persuade their menfolk to spend Saturday afternoon with them away from football. Better car parking facilities are clearly also high on the list of priorities.

177. When proposing new and better facilities it is, of course, assumed that these will be on a scale appropriate to the potential audiences. It is not suggested that smaller clubs in small population areas should build large stadia which will remain unused. Once again we return to the point that there are very different levels of football operating within the League and the clubs should cut their coats accordingly. The elite of the First Division, now international clubs, drawing large and increasing crowds and making reasonable and increasing profits, should provide facilities on that scale. They should aim to be playing in stadia which compare with the best in the world, in Madrid, Lisbon, Mexico City or Rio de Janeiro. Our best clubs compare favourably with the best in the world in the entertainment they provide on the pitch; they should also provide the spectators with facilities that compare favourably with the best in the world.

178. These great clubs must begin to see themselves as major regional entertainment centres. Merseyside, South East Lancashire, the West Riding of Yorkshire, the industrial North East, the West Midlands, North East London and West London could each, in our view, support such stadia as the home of a great club—in some cases being shared by more than one club. Some leading international matches could take place in these new regional stadia, which would be showplaces for football in those areas. Even Wembley stadium, still a wonderful ground, cannot now accommodate all who wish to attend the Cup Final and other big matches and London lags behind Glasgow.

179. Given their playing success, and given the changes in the F.A. Rule suggested in paragraph 199, allowing a higher return on capital, we see no reason why much of the capital required should not be available from private and market sources. This should be particularly so if the facilities contain provision for social entertainment of a profitable kind. The recent development of Ascot-style boxes, for letting at a high price, seen at Manchester United, and the association of seats with debenture issues, could be fruitful sources of capital and income.

180. For the majority of clubs, however, and particularly for those in the lower divisions, such developments would be totally inappropriate. The problem which faces them and us, therefore, is how to improve facilities on a modest scale where there is no capital available and no prospect of raising any even on the smaller scale required. The most fruitful possibility would be for smaller clubs to develop as community centres for the district, with some provision for other recreational and social activities. These would probably be best provided in conjunction with the local council. Such an arrangement is common in Northern Europe, where local authorities frequently build a football stadium

as the central focus of a multi-sports and recreational complex and lease the ground to the local football club. By this means a club could improve its facilities and at the same time become part of the community's recreation centre and thus play a bigger part in inspiring, encouraging and coaching local footballers. Moreover, by providing social facilities, existing together with facilities for other sports, football clubs might be able to meet the growing social trend away from passive watching towards greater participation.

181. The development of community multi-purpose sports complexes is already part of national policy in this country with the Local Authorities as the key factor in co-operation with the local Sports Council and industry. We support this development and feel that it would be desirable for the appropriate levels of League football to integrate with it. Naturally this would be a slow process and there are difficulties. In particular, many League club grounds are unsuitable for development on these lines, being too near the centre of towns. However, it might be possible to sell such grounds to the local Council for housing and in conjunction with it to provide more spacious facilities further out. The growth of private transport makes this more feasible today than in earlier times. It is possible to conceive of—and we believe desirable to encourage—financial co-operation between the club, providing such capital as it could, its Local Authority, and the Levy Board proposed in Chapter VII.

THE SCOTTISH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

182. Established in 1890 the Scottish Football League is composed of two divisions, the First containing 18 clubs and the Second 19 clubs (20 until the resignation of Third Lanark in 1967). The two bottom clubs in the First Division are relegated and the two top clubs in the Second are promoted. In addition the same teams take part in a League Cup in the early weeks of the season. There is also, as in England, a Challenge Cup promoted by the Scottish Football Association.

183. Much of what we have said about trends in the English League, but by no means all, also applies to the Scottish League; declining attendances, the emergence of a few clubs with international reputations and prosperous finances, the financial difficulties of many clubs leading recently to one having to resign from the League.

184. Attendances at League Cup and League Championship matches have fallen steadily from 6.4 million in 1956–57 to 4 million in 1965–66. This is true of both the First and Second Divisions though attendances in the former fell by a third against nearly two-thirds in the latter. A somewhat similar difference has occurred between the First and Second Division sections of the League Cup.

185. On the other hand players' wages have not risen to the extent they have in England. For one thing the Scottish League has never had a maximum wage and therefore wages have all along been at the level decided by supply and demand. For another, only half the professional players registered with the League are full-time. The Second Division clubs, one of which is wholly amateur, rely on part-time professionals as do 5 of the 18 First Division clubs. Most of the full-time players get less than they would in the English First or Second Divisions.

186. We invited all the clubs to provide us with the same particulars of their finances that we asked for from the English League clubs. Unfortunately eight clubs, four from each division⁽¹⁾ either refused outright or notwithstanding several requests, failed to provide us with the required information. As a result our financial analysis must necessarily be incomplete, unlike our figures for England.

187. In general the pattern is similar to that for the English League clubs. In the three years 1963-4 to 1965-6 match and miscellaneous receipts of the 14 First Division clubs (excluding Aberdeen, Celtic, Kilmarnock and Rangers) rose from £525,000 to £638,000 or by over 20 per cent. Salaries, team and administrative expenses rose however, from £731,000 to £893,000 or by a slightly higher percentage. As a result the operating loss which was £206,000 in 1963-4 rose to £255,000 in 1965-6. The loss in 1963-4 was more than made good by net gains from transfer fees (£111,000) and contributions by Supporters' Clubs etc. (£144,000) leaving a surplus of £49,000. In 1965-6 however, transfer fees produced £84,000 and Supporters' Clubs, bingo games, raffles etc. £161,000, not quite sufficient to turn the operating loss into a surplus. Even so taking the three years as a whole a total operating loss of £634,000 was turned into a surplus of £210,000 by means of £378,000 from transfer fees, presumably paid by English League clubs, and £466,000 from Supporters' Clubs etc. If to that surplus is added the net profits of Aberdeen, Celtic, Kilmarnock and Rangers for the three years—£239,000, i.e. more than all the other 14 clubs put together—it is understandable that the Scottish First Division carried forward over £400,000 of accumulated profits. It is noticeable that during the same period £93,000 was paid in dividends mainly by Rangers, or four times as much as was paid by the whole of the English League clubs.

188. In the case of the 15 Second Division clubs, match and miscellaneous receipts fell from £183,000 in 1963-4 to £179,000 in 1965-6 whereas salaries, team and administrative expenses rose from £257,000 to £275,000. Yet again transfer fees, Supporters' Clubs etc. turned the operating deficit into a surplus—£19,000 in 1963-4 but only £11,000 in 1965-6. At the end of 1965-6 the 15 clubs whose accounts are covered by the analysis carried forward an accumulated surplus of £137,000.

189. Several points are worth noticing:

- (i) As with the English League, Scottish clubs in general make an operating loss, i.e. their match receipts do not cover team and administrative expenses.
- (ii) As a result receipts from Development and Supporters' Clubs, bingo, raffles, etc. are very important indeed, amounting to nearly 30 per cent of the match and other receipts as against only 20 per cent in the English League.
- (iii) Unlike their English counterparts Scottish clubs as a whole make a substantial profit from transfer fees. In the three years 1963-4 to 1965-6 the two Scottish Divisions (excluding the eight clubs) made a profit of nearly half a million whereas the four English Divisions paid out

¹⁾ Aberdeen, Celtic, Kilmarnock and Rangers (1st Division) and Albion Rovers, East Stirling, Hamilton and Morton (2nd Division).

net nearly one million. Thus what is a considerable financial drain on English clubs, though no doubt reflected in increased match receipts, is a major source of strength to Scottish clubs.

- (iv) Contributions from the Scottish League are a significant part of the financial picture. In 1966-67 the Scottish League received £199,000 for the use of its fixtures by the Pools. Out of this the League met most of its administrative expenses (the former levy on gate receipts having been abolished) and paid the fees and expenses of all Referees and Linesmen (£16,000). The balance of £137,000 was distributed among the clubs, not equally as in England, but according to the number of points each club gained in the League Championship—the more successful the club the more received. To the Second Division clubs in particular the money they receive from the League is a substantial element in their finances. Neither the Scottish F.A. nor the Scottish League Cup has the pooling arrangement used in the corresponding English competitions.
- (v) One important element is the method of distributing gate receipts between the home and the visiting teams. In the English League the home team takes the bulk of the net receipts—paying 4 per cent to the Football League and 1s. 0d. for each adult and 6d. for each school child who attend the match or are season ticket holders, to the visiting club (with a minimum of £100). In Scotland the ground admission receipts are shared equally between the two clubs. The Scottish arrangement is particularly important in a country in which a large part of the population is in two centres—Glasgow and Edinburgh—and the rest is scattered rather thinly over the country. A small club which visits Celtic Park or Ibrox in a Cup match greatly gains from this arrangement.

190. The Management Committee of the Scottish League have proposed changes in the structure of the League but, as in England, the proposals have been unable to secure the necessary majority. Their view, which we share, is that "the Leagues as presently constituted are too large and consequently there are too many League matches of a meaningless character being played". The Management Committee therefore proposed dividing the clubs into three divisions. In that way all clubs would ultimately find themselves in the division for which they were most fitted.

191. Scotland, with a population of 5.2 million, has 37 League clubs whereas England with a population of 48 million (including Wales with four League clubs, for this purpose) has 92 League clubs. As a result the difference between the top and bottom clubs, financial and playing wise, is very much greater in Scotland than in England. Several of the top clubs rank with the best produced by any country in the world. At the other extreme are clubs composed of part-time professionals with gates reckoned in hundreds rather than thousands, some of which are well below the standard of the English Fourth Division. More games are one-sided in Scotland and therefore less exciting and attractive to spectators. Having regard to the small populations on which most Scottish League clubs can draw for support there is no obvious way of improving their finances dramatically. But sorting the clubs into three classes, instead of two, would be more in keeping with the differing levels of competitive ability. **We therefore recommend** the adoption of a scheme on the lines of that put forward by Brechin City in May 1967 for three Leagues on a 16—12—12 basis with an

extra competition for the Second and Third Division clubs to make up the fixtures required for a full season.

192. In one way the Scottish League is in a better condition than the English League. Its smaller clubs have long since learnt to live within their means. Notwithstanding very small attendances, (the average over the season for all First and Second Division Championship matches was about 5,000) they have managed to keep in existence by keeping their costs very low, mainly by the use of part-time professionals and little expenditure on administration. As a result whereas at the end of the 1965-6 season the clubs in the English Fourth Division carried forward a deficit of some half a million the clubs in the Scottish Second Division carried forward a surplus of some £137,000.

193. The position in Scotland is, however, much worse in one very important respect—the loss of many of the best and most entertaining players to the English League. In Scotland the majority of the clubs are not only in danger of losing their best players to a few top Scottish First Division clubs, they are even more likely to lose them to English First and Second Division clubs. English League Football without Baxter, Crerand, Cooke, Gilzean, Law, Mackay, St. John, Ure and a dozen or so more outstanding former Scottish League players would be much less exciting and entertaining. True their transfer produced much needed financial aid for their former clubs but at the expense of the attractiveness of top level Scottish football. Unless more than three or four Scottish Clubs can offer the terms which 30 or 40 English clubs can offer this talent drain will continue. And if Celtic and Rangers ever decide to throw in their lot with a British or European League the general future of the Scottish professional game would be very bleak indeed.

CLUB STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

The Football League

194. English League Clubs, with one exception (Nottingham Forest) are limited liability companies. Their issued share capital in 1966 was as in Table 7.

TABLE 7
FOOTBALL LEAGUE CLUBS' SHARE CAPITAL, 1967

<i>Division</i>	<i>Ordinary</i> £	<i>Preference</i> £	<i>Total</i> £
First	155,000	28,000	183,000
Second	347,000	22,000	369,000
Third	245,000	30,000	275,000
Fourth	221,000	19,000	240,000
	£968,000	£99,000	£1,067,000

Source: League Clubs.

The share capital is thus quite small, not much more than £10,000 per club on average. In the same year about £11,000 was paid in dividends, of which £10,000 was paid by First Division clubs, an average of a little over 5 per cent overall for this Division. In contrast not a penny in dividends was paid on the £515,000 invested in the Third and Fourth Division clubs.

195. With the odd exception the companies are public and are subject to the provisions of the Companies Act applying to that type of company. All are also subject to certain very limiting conditions laid down by the Football Association. Rule 45(a) of the Association provides that the following Clauses must be accepted by Club Companies as conditions of membership of the Association and inserted in their Articles of Association:—

- “(i) *Dividends*. A larger dividend shall not be declared than the maximum dividend allowed from time to time by The Football Association and may be cumulative for a period not exceeding three years (that is to say, the past three consecutive years). . . . the maximum dividend payable in respect of any year shall be $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, but if the dividend is paid free of income tax such maximum dividend shall be 5 per cent.
- (ii) *Preference Shares*. Preference Shares may be issued with a cumulative preference dividend not exceeding £7 10s. 0d. per cent for a period not exceeding three years (that is to say, the past three consecutive years); but the Company may not issue more Preference Shares than its subscribed Ordinary Shares.
- (iii) *Shares*. A share shall not be subdivided. No Club Company shall make any bonus issue or pay any capital dividend without the written consent of the Council.
- (iv) *Mortgage and Other Securities*. No Mortgage, or other Security or charge upon any assets of the Company to secure more than the principal money advanced, and interest at $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum, shall be issued without the previous consent of The Football Association. All Loans to the Company except with the previous consent of The Football Association shall be limited to the same rate of interest.
- (v) *Shareholders' Season Tickets*. A Shareholder may have issued to him a Season Ticket or Tickets subject to a deduction of 5 per cent from the amount charged to non-shareholders. Tickets so issued must not be sold and the privilege granted under this Clause shall be restricted to such holder, and in the case of transference or death to such member of his family as shall become the registered holder of the Shares. The privilege cannot be sold or granted to any other transferee.
- (vi) *No Remuneration to Directors*. A Director shall not be entitled to receive any remuneration in respect of his office as director or as an employee of the Club.
- (vii) *Disqualification of Directors*. The office of a Director shall be vacated if he be suspended by The Football Association from taking part in football management.
- (viii) *Winding-up of the Company*. On the winding-up of the Company the surplus assets shall be applied, first, in repaying to the Members the amount paid on their shares respectively, and if such assets shall be insufficient to repay the said amount in full, they shall be applied rateably, so that the loss shall fall upon the Members in proportion to the amount called up on their shares respectively, and no Member shall be entitled to have any call made upon other Members for the purpose of adjusting his rights; but where any call has been made and has been paid by some of the Members such call be enforced against the remaining

Members for the purpose of adjusting the rights of the Members between themselves.

If the surplus assets shall be more than sufficient to pay to the Members the whole amount paid upon their shares, the balance shall be given to The Football Association Benevolent Fund, or to some other Club or Institute in the (city or county) having objects similar to those contained in the Memorandum of Association, or to any local charity, or charitable or benevolent institution situate within the said (city or county), such club, institution, or charity, to be decided upon and such property apportioned among all or any of such clubs, institutions, or charities by the Members of the Club, at or before the time of dissolution as they shall direct, or in default of any such decision or apportionment by the Members of the Club, the same to be decided upon and apportioned by a Judge of the High Court of Justice having jurisdiction in such winding-up or dissolution and as he shall determine, or such balance may be disposed of in such other manner as the Members of the Club with the consent of the Council of The Football Association, if then existing, shall determine”.

196. This combination of company structure and F.A. restrictions seem to us to pose three questions:

- (i) Are the present restrictions on directors' fees and dividends necessary or desirable?
- (ii) Would the management structure gain if more people were entitled to participate in the election of directors?
- (iii) What should be the role and status of the Manager?

Financial Restrictions

DIRECTORS' FEES

197. The inability of English League clubs to pay fees to their directors is not bad for the game. We received no evidence asking for the rule to be abolished or changed. Yet there is no similar restriction in Scotland. Even there, however, we understand that little or no advantage is taken of the freedom. The absence of a fee does not mean that directors obtain no benefits from their directorships. To be a director of a well-known League club usually carries considerable status in a town. It provides opportunities for entertaining and the granting of favours (e.g. tickets for popular matches). If the team plays abroad it may provide cheap or free travel. Providing a director is keen on football the indirect tax free value he obtains from his seat on the board may be well above any taxable fee he might have obtained. We are not saying that he does not deserve all he obtains; we are merely pointing out that the absence of a fee can seldom be a material consideration in the decision as to whether to join a Board.

THE LIMITATION ON DIVIDENDS

198. The arguments for abolishing or raising the present $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent maximum are:

- (i) There is no limitation in Scotland and there is no evidence that freedom has had bad effects there.

- (ii) 7½ per cent is in any case an absurdly low limit for risk capital having regard to current interest rates.
- (iii) An attractive yield on equity capital might bring money into the game for needed ground improvements.
- (iv) The possibility of raising equity capital could increase the number of shareholders and thus make it more difficult for clubs to get into the hands of two or three people.

The arguments against are:

- (i) The present arrangement makes it quite clear that no director or shareholder can make much money out of a club, at least directly. The most popular entertainment in the country is avowedly non-commercial.
- (ii) The abolition would be unlikely to help the clubs most in need. It could be another factor widening the gap between the prosperous and the struggling clubs.
- (iii) Higher dividends would take money out of the game which at present is ploughed back.
- (iv) We have not received any demand for the abolition or the raising of the ceiling.

199. It would not be good for the game in general if League clubs were free to disburse their profits without limit. **We recommend**, however, that the present maximum should be raised to 15 per cent where the shares are fully transferable. The increase would not affect the great majority of League clubs which cannot even afford to pay any dividend, but might enable some of the more successful clubs to raise money for major ground improvements.

Widening Membership

200. Most League clubs are managed by a board of five to seven directors, including the chairman. Three clubs have as few as three directors, and one has thirteen. Directors are elected by the shareholders and as in the case of any industrial concern, dissatisfaction with results should, in theory, lead to existing directors being replaced by new ones; in football clubs dissatisfaction is not measured by dividends but by playing results. The process of changing unsatisfactory directors is obviously easier when the number of shareholders is large, for then it is less easy for existing directors to keep most of the voting power in their own hands.

201. The Football League clubs supplied the Committee with information about their shareholdings, from which Tables 8 and 9 were compiled:

202. Several points emerge from our analysis. The first, not revealed by the tables, is that in about one-third of the clubs the shares are not freely transferable, but can be bought only with the approval of the board of directors. In many cases this is a formality but in some it is a method whereby the directors keep control of the club in their own hands.

TABLE 8
FOOTBALL LEAGUE CLUBS
Number of Shareholders, 1967

Number of Shareholders	Division				Total
	First*	Second	Third	Fourth	
0-100	2	2	—	—	4
101-200	4	2	1	3	10
201-300	3	1	—	2	6
301-400	3	2	2	4	11
401-500	3	3	4	2	12
0-500	15	10	7	11	43
501-1,000	5	5	9	6	25
1,001-1,500	1	3	1	5	10
1,501-2,000	—	3	4	2	9
Over 2,000	—	1	3	—	4
	21	22	24	24	91
	—	—	—	—	—

* Excluding Nottingham Forest, which is a membership club.

TABLE 9
FOOTBALL LEAGUE CLUBS
Distribution of Shareholding, 1967. Percentage of total issued capital in hands of Chairman and Board

	Division				Total
	First*	Second	Third	Fourth	
Less than 25 %	8	10	9	9	36
25%—49%	10	4	8	11	32
50%—75%	2	5	7	3	17
Over 75%	1	3	—	1	5
	21	22	24	24	91
	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Percentage of Total Issued Capital in hands of Chairman</i>					
Less than 25%	20	15	22	20	76
25%—49%	1	6	2	4	13
50%—75%	—	1	—	—	1
Over 75%	—	—	—	—	—
	21	22	24	24	91
	—	—	—	—	—

* Excluding Nottingham Forest.

203. Second, there are wide extremes in numbers of shareholders. In one Second Division club, admittedly a private company, half the shares are held by the Chairman and the other half by the six other directors, there being no other shareholders. At the other extremes four clubs had 2,500 or more shareholders. The most popular size was 500-800, which having regard to the small capital involved implies an average shareholding of £5 to £10, or even less.

204. In 22 clubs the chairman and directors held more than half the shares—in other words, provided they were in agreement they could not be out-voted. In

another 31 cases the Board held between a quarter and a half of the shares and in 15 of these they held more than a third. When it is borne in mind that many shares are held by people who no longer take an active interest in the club (some are indeed difficult to trace being, for example, widows of former active shareholders), it will be seen that more than half the Boards are unlikely to be defeated if they agree among themselves. At the other extreme there are three First Division clubs in which the Board owns less than 5 per cent of the shares.

205. The analysis of holdings by the Chairmen shows that the great majority owned less than 25 per cent of the share capital, in most cases less than 5 per cent. In 19 clubs they held a bigger share than the rest of the Board.

206. No clear conclusions about the best form of shareholding structure emerge from this analysis. Of the 10 clubs which appeared most frequently in the top ten of the First Division in the last 20 years (Paragraph 143), five have free and five have restricted transfer. The proportion of issued capital held by their Boards ranges from 5 per cent to 55 per cent and by the Chairmen from less than 5 per cent in six cases to nearly 50 per cent in one. Two of the clubs have only around 100 shareholders, the general pattern of shareholding, however, being very much like the pattern for all clubs, successful and unsuccessful.

207. There are in effect two kinds of League club: a small number which are highly profitable and a great majority which cannot cover their operating costs and are dependent on the efforts of Supporters' Clubs, sweepstakes and payments from the League. It has been suggested that the latter should recognise that they are not commercial enterprises in the normal sense of the term and instead become "membership" clubs. Nottingham Forest has been cited as a possible model.

208. Nottingham Forest is the only League club not constituted under the Companies Act. It is an ordinary membership club regulated simply and solely by its rules. These limit membership to 250 (125 Vice-Presidents and 125 ordinary members) who pay one guinea a year. The management committee has nine members, two coming up for election each year by the 250 members of the club. Every committee member is required to enter into a personal guarantee with the club's bankers and any other financial body from which the club has received a loan or financial facilities, so that the club's financial commitments are covered. There is a waiting list for membership and as vacancies occur they are filled in strict order of application.

209. There are no advantages in the Nottingham Forest club's form of constitution which cannot be obtained from the limited company form. General membership is more limited than in most League clubs if membership is equated with shareholding. Membership of the Board is limited to those who can undertake the financial obligation and as a result it is not easy to find new directors. If widespread membership is the aim this can be more readily achieved by freely transferable shares, widely held, and entitling holders to the normal rights of shareholders—voting at the Annual General Meeting, copies of annual reports and accounts, etc.

210. Within the limited company form it would also be possible to provide rights for two classes of supporter, upon which, after all, the success of the club depends—season ticket holders and the Supporters' Club. The constitution of the company could entitle season ticket holders of say, three years' standing, to

vote at annual meetings. Supporters' Clubs seldom have much direct voice in the affairs of their clubs. Sometimes the Chairman is invited to Board meetings or has close links with the directors. But in general there is no clear relationship between a Board and its Supporters' Clubs; sometimes it is close and friendly, sometimes it is uneasy. Where a club's shares are freely purchasable members of the Supporters' Club may acquire them and the voting rights that go with them. The constitution of the club could, however, be drafted so as to entitle the Supporters' Club to appoint a representative on the Board. In these and other ways clubs could link themselves more closely with the local community. Judged by the number of shareholders some clubs have already moved a long way in that direction.

211. There remain, however, a small group of successful clubs in the large centres of population which are likely to thrive financially and could attract equity capital for their development. Operation on normal commercial lines, with shares freely marketable on the Stock Exchange and paying dividends up to the higher maximum of 15 per cent, could enable such clubs to develop their grounds to a standard comparable to the best in other countries.

The Manager

212. There are two aspects of the management of a League Club. On the one hand there is the club as a business enterprise: the handling of its finances, the administration of the ground and the exploitation of the sales and revenue-earning capacity of the club. On the other there is the selection, coaching and handling of the players so that a successful team is produced. It is not easy to find in one man the qualities necessary for success in both aspects. Most managers are team managers. They have had good careers as professional footballers and probably hold the F.A. coaching award. Few have had much, if any, experience or training in managing a commercial enterprise, though some have natural talents as business managers. They know they will be judged largely on the success of the team and are likely to be dismissed if it has a poor record. Most readily accept this as a necessary condition of their office.

213. The fact that football is a popular sport tends to conceal the fact that League clubs are also business enterprises. With the increase in players' salaries and ground costs, a club can be financially viable only if it is managed efficiently and attracts sufficient customers. A League Club is a form of public entertainment and like any other such activity it depends on its management whether it be a profitable or a perilous venture. Notwithstanding the serious financial problems which have faced many clubs in recent years, we doubt whether most have yet given sufficient attention to management.

214. The final responsibility for the good business management of clubs lies with their Boards. It has been frequently represented to us that the calibre of club directors is today not sufficiently high to meet the challenge of an increasingly competitive leisure business. Our experience, despite outstanding exceptions, does not conflict with this view. But it is not easy to see the remedy. "Opening up" club and Board membership, partly in the way suggested in Paragraph 210, should help. Certainly it ought to be easier for unsuccessful or unsuitable Boards to be changed. The present power of many Boards to refuse to register shareholders should also be reconsidered by the League in this

context. If it protects football from genuinely undesirable people then it is justified, but the danger is that it may be used to exclude dynamic people who could energise and professionalise Club Boards. In any case it is highly desirable for clubs to attract on to their Boards men with substantial business training and experience. They would provide a degree of professionalism necessary for the future growth of the game.

215. Everyday observations shows that the most important responsibility of the Board is to appoint a good team manager. He is essential to a club's sporting and, therefore, financial success. But he may not have business or general managerial ability—or, if he has, may not, especially in a large club, have time to fill that role. A few clubs already recognise this distinction by appointing General Managers concerned with the finance and business side of their activities. This development could beneficially be extended where appropriate with the appointment of men of proper professional background and training.

216. If managers could be made members of Boards it would give management its proper status. At the moment two F.A. Rules stand in the way of this. Rule 45(a)(vi) already quoted, prescribes that a Director cannot receive any remuneration in respect of his office as director "or as an employee of the Club". We recommend that managers, though employees of their clubs, should be exempted from this prohibition. They would not be entitled to receive any remuneration as directors, but the fact that they were paid officers would not exclude them from the Board. Rule 31 prohibits a professional player or apprentice, or a professional reinstated after the 30th April 1924, from serving on the Committee of any League or Club. The Council may, however, if it thinks fit, exempt him from the restrictions if he has ceased to play football or if he is playing without remuneration. We later recommend in (Para. 398) that this Rule be rescinded.

The Scottish Football League

217. The general ideas underlying the paragraphs dealing with the management of clubs in the Football League also apply to Scottish League clubs. There are, however, two major differences.

218. First, there are no prescribed limits to dividends. In practice, however, the financial weaknesses of most of the clubs make such a limitation unnecessary. We have not received any complaints or criticism of the Scottish arrangements and we see no point in striving for complete uniformity between England and Scotland and Wales. Nevertheless, we draw the attention of the Scottish Football Association and the Scottish League to the general tenor of our recommendations regarding the structure of League Clubs.

219. Second, directors may receive remuneration. Here again, however, there is no evidence that the position is significantly different from that obtaining in the English Football League. The absence of the prohibition does, however, have one effect. There is no equivalent Scottish rule prohibiting former or even current professional players from being directors.⁽¹⁾

(1) See Paragraph 412 for rule on membership of Scottish F.A. Council.

CHAPTER IV

THE PLAYERS

220. According to the Football Association there are four classes of players, namely, (a) Associated Schoolboys, (b) Apprentices, (c) Amateurs, and (d) Professionals (including permit players).

The first category has already been dealt with in Chapter II. This chapter is concerned with the other categories.

THE APPRENTICE SCHEME

221. The apprentice scheme for young players came into being in 1960. Prior to that date young players were engaged as "ground staff" boys. They learned something about the game while also helping to sweep the terraces, scrub the dressing room floors, clean the senior players' boots, and eventually were offered professional terms by the clubs employing them if they showed the necessary ability or promise in the game.

222. Apprentices to Football League Clubs are governed by Regulation 47 of the League, which can be summarised as follows:

- (i) A player between his 15th and 17th birthdays, who is not on the role of a recognised school, may be registered as an apprentice for a period to terminate on his 18th birthday.
- (ii) On or after his 17th birthday an apprentice may sign as a professional player subject to the rules and regulations of the League or he may remain an apprentice until his 18th birthday. When he reaches his 18th birthday he must decide whether to become a professional player or whether to revert to amateur status. If he decides to become a professional player, he must sign for the club for which he was registered as an apprentice, unless he has its consent to sign for another League club. If he reverts to amateur status he cannot subsequently sign or play for another League club, as a professional or amateur, until two years have passed, unless he has the consent of his former club.
- (iii) An apprentice may apply to his club for cancellation of his registration and revert to amateur status, but may not subsequently register or play for another League club, whether as a professional or amateur, until after a lapse of two years.
- (iv) The registration form of an apprentice must be attested by the player's parent or guardian.
- (v) At the request of the apprentice or his parent a club must allow the apprentice to continue his further education or to take up suitable vocational training.
- (vi) If the club fails to fulfil this obligation or the Conditions of the Contract of Service, the apprentice is entitled to apply to the club for cancellation of his registration and contract and to revert to his amateur status or to sign as an apprentice for another club. If his application is unreasonably

refused or delayed he may appeal to the Management Committee of the League and if either party is dissatisfied with a decision there is right of appeal to the Football Association.

(vii) The Football League prescribe a minimum weekly wage of £5. The maximum weekly wage cannot exceed the following: 15–16 years of age £7; 16–17 years of age £8; 17–18 years of age £10. A club may pay for all or part of an apprentice's lodgings up to a maximum of £4 a week, but not directly to the apprentice.

(viii) No League club may have more than 15 apprentices at any one time.

223. Rule 32 of the Football Association⁽¹⁾ confirms the League rule and extends it, with suitable adjustments, to other professional clubs in full membership of the Association to the extent of allowing them to register one apprentice for each five full-time professional players.

224. In the first season of the scheme (1960–61) English League Clubs registered 220 apprentices and 3,022 professionals, or 1 apprentice for every 14 senior players. By 1966–67 the number of apprentices had grown to 592 and the number of professionals had fallen to 2,395, or 1 apprentice for every 4 senior players. In large part this must reflect the abolition of the maximum wage, which has adversely affected the financial position of many clubs and so caused them to reduce their professional playing strength. Apprentice players cannot entirely make up the reserve strength which a club needs, but they can make a useful, inexpensive contribution to it. But whatever the reason for the increase, both absolute and relative, in the number of apprentice players, it is clear that the apprentice scheme has now become an important element in the professional game. It is therefore desirable to examine its contribution to the development and well-being of the game.

225. We asked the English League Clubs to provide us with information about the use they were now making of former apprentices. Replies from 37 clubs, from all four divisions, showed that 617 young players joined the clubs as apprentices during the five seasons 1962–63 to 1966–67. Of these, 380 had now completed their apprenticeship and 154 were still in that state, leaving a wastage of 83 players or some 13 per cent. Of the 380 players who had completed their apprenticeships, 300 had signed on as professionals with their clubs, and of these 222 were still with their clubs. Only 78 who signed professional forms had played 10 times or more in the first team of their clubs. Of the 165 first team players who turned out for the 15 First Division clubs providing information, 35 or rather more than two players per team had come up through the apprenticeship scheme.

226. It is too early yet to make a full assessment of the benefits of the scheme but two aspects need to be kept under review. On the one hand it is not, and never can be, the only entry into professional football. It therefore differs from the typical old type apprenticeship scheme found in engineering and other trades and crafts. Nevertheless, the implication of the scheme is that the youths will receive a proper training which, added to their natural aptitude, should put them in a better position than other youths to get to the top of the professional game. Clubs which do not take this objective seriously but treat apprentices

⁽¹⁾ Rule 45(c) of the Football Association of Wales. There is no corresponding scheme in Scotland.

largely as they did the ground staff boys before them (as helpers to clean the ground) are not honouring their obligations.

227. On the other hand, there is bound to be a good deal of wastage. Some youths will not live up to their early promise, some may change their minds. The wastage and frustration will be worse if the total number of apprentices is well beyond that needed to maintain the number of active full-time professionals. It is important, therefore, that clubs should ensure that an apprentice receives adequate non-football training and experience which might equip him for another trade or profession should he not succeed in the game. Both these aspects should be kept under review by the Standing Joint Committee of the F.A.

228. The other aspect of the apprentice scheme which causes us some concern is the limit on the freedom of movement. We have already noticed and commented adversely upon the rule which gives a club a one-way option on the signing of one of their associated schoolboys as an apprentice (paragraphs 65-67). Similarly, once he signs as an apprentice he is tied to that club. He is even barred for two years from playing as an amateur for another League club without the permission of his present club.

229. We are against one-way options in contracts. We can appreciate a club offering apprenticeship terms which include a firm offer of a professional contract for say two years after the termination of the apprenticeship. We dislike, however, a system in which a boy has no option but to register as a professional for the club to which he is apprenticed should they wish him to do so. The financial attraction to the club to exercise this option is increased by the present transfer system, for once signed as a professional the boy cannot go to another League club without his club's permission, a permission which may involve a transfer fee. Of course, the club has to offer the player a reasonable contract, but at that early stage in his career it may not be easy for him to prove that the offer is unreasonable. In any case he may be more concerned with securing a better club, irrespective of the financial offer.

230. The Transfer Levy introduced into Regulation 40 by the League in 1967 should provide some check on clubs holding on to apprentices unnecessarily. Any club signing a player on his first professional engagement must pay a signing on fee of £500, half of which goes to the League's Provident Fund and half to the player. In addition, therefore, to having to pay at least the minimum weekly wage (£8 a week at 18 and £9 at 19) a club must pay £500 for each of the apprentices they retain as professionals. Nevertheless, it may be a worthwhile gamble for a club to retain many of their apprentices as professionals in the hope that at least one of them may show a handsome profit when ultimately transferred to another club.

231. Those who support the present restrictions on the movement of a young player argue that the club, having invested in the player, is entitled to retain his registration. But it is difficult to accept that the investment amounts to much. Financially the investment is limited; and the coaching and training provided probably determine the player's performance far less than his natural ability. There is no obligation on the club ultimately to sign as a professional a young player who has not developed to its liking, and it is equally reasonable that a young player in demand should have the right to refuse the terms offered by the club and to seek engagement by another club.

232. **We recommend** that when an apprentice signs as a full professional player at 17 or 18 years of age he should be free to sign for any club, except that no other club shall be entitled to approach him without his club's consent before three months of the end of his apprenticeship period.

AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL

233. Rule 24 of the Football Association implies that there are in effect two types of professional: those who are registered with the Association as professional players and every player, other than an apprentice, who, without being so registered, fails to satisfy Rule 25 relating to Amateur Players. There can be no dispute about who is included in the first category. The second category, however, turns on the definition which distinguishes the amateur from the professional. The part of Rule 25 which deals with this goes into considerable details, e.g. if a player travels to the game in his own car he must not be reimbursed at a rate exceeding the amount he would have paid had he travelled by 'bus or by 2nd class rail. In substance, however, the Rule is that anyone who "received remuneration or consideration of any sort above his necessary hotel and travelling expenses actually paid"⁽¹⁾ is deemed to be a professional.

234. This definition is obviously open to diverse interpretations, some loose, some very strict, and because of this some players are said to be sham-amateurs. But "shamateurism" is not provided for in the F.A.'s Rules. A player must either be clearly a professional or clearly an amateur. The great bulk of players are, of course, amateurs. Indeed, probably less than 1 per cent of all adult players are professionals in either sense of the term.

235. The rules governing the two classes of players differ substantially. Broadly the differences are as follows:

- (i) Registration: All professional players must be registered with the F.A. and the approval of the F.A. is required to their registration. Amateurs are not required to register with the F.A., but may be required to be registered either with the league in which their club plays or with the County F.A. A Football League club cannot play an amateur in a League match unless he is registered with the League.
- (ii) Transfer: The transfer of the registration of a professional player from one club to another requires the approval of the F.A. and such transfers must be in accordance with the F.A. Rules. An amateur may move freely from club to club, except that in the few Leagues directly under the control of the F.A. he cannot play for more than two clubs in one season, nor can he play for more than one club in most cup competitions.
- (iii) Payments for transfer: The F.A. Rules do not deal directly with the professional transfer fee system. They do, however, prohibit payments to an agent, and the form of agreement between the player and the club is printed in its Rules. It is the Football League or other appropriate professional league management committee which controls the payments. The F.A. Rules, however, clearly prohibit payments between clubs for the transfer of amateurs and the offering to or acceptance by any player of any inducement to move from one club to another.

⁽¹⁾ A player receiving a money prize in a football contest and any player competing in such contest though not receiving prize money may be declared to be a professional.

- (iv) Participation in Competitions: Whilst all competitions open to professionals are also open to amateurs, there are many important competitions in which teams cannot include even one professional. Thus the F.A. Amateur Challenge Cup is confined to amateur clubs. Any club having even one registered professional is not an amateur club. The same rule applies to most leagues and competitions, even such major competitions as the Northern and Isthmian Leagues.

In many such competitions, e.g., the Amateur Cup and the Northern League, even former professional players who wish now to play without remuneration are debarred. These are called "permit players" because they require permission of the F.A. to play for a club without remuneration. Even after being given such permission they are barred from playing in many competitions, including some of the most important. They are barred not because they are "professionals" at the time of playing, but because they have once been so registered.

- (v) Restrictions: A professional player is prohibited from serving on the Council of the F.A. or on the Committee of any County Association, League or Club, or from representing his own or any other Association, League or Club at any Football meeting. But if he ceases to play football or plays without remuneration he may be exempted by the F.A. from any of these restrictions. Amateur players, whether still playing or retired, are not subject to any such restrictions.

236. This last distinction underlines the gulf which exists in the minds of some people between the professional and the amateur player. Both play football but one earns his living that way and the other does not. No doubt the distinction was originally closely related to social status, corresponding to the player-gentleman classification which used to exist in cricket. It was then also an income distinction between those who could not and those who could afford to play at their own expense. But social and income class apart there are quite large numbers of people who dislike any connection between sport and the making of money. To them the ideals underlying the Olympic Games are their ideals. To them money payments introduce a new factor. As "the root of all evil" money is seen as producing bad sportsmanship, bribery, corruption, betting, excessive partisanship, indeed anything which is not thought to be "sporting". Even many who do not hold such strong views have worries about the effect that the pursuit of money may have on players, spectators and the game generally. Ammunition for such views is provided from time to time by the press and television accounts of the big League games, when some among the highest paid in the game are seen to lose their tempers either with the referee or other players or commit serious fouls, and where the partisanship of the spectators can hardly be regarded as sporting. The fact that similar goings on may occur in some wholly amateur matches is concealed by their not having the same news value.

237. We do not think that social status is any longer a reason for discriminating between classes of players. Football is a professional career no less worthy than many other professional careers—certainly in the world of entertainment. Young men with aptitude and diligence can now earn large salaries and may subsequently have distinguished careers as managers. The professional has raised the standard of play and the standard of physical fitness to levels well above those which can

be attained by most amateurs. A player who rises to the top of his profession by playing the game skilfully and cleanly is fully entitled to be a proud man.

238. It can be argued, however, that the distinction, though possibly originally influenced by the kind of attitudes just outlined, is now rooted in the experience and needs of the game. There could be said to be two justifications. First, the relationship between a player and his club is inevitably different if regular payments are involved than if they are not. The professional is an employee with a contract of service, whereas the amateur is a member of a club, to which he usually subscribes and like the member of any club, social or otherwise, is a free agent. Second, the person who plays the game for his living is likely to be more skilful and better trained than the general run of players. It seems logical, therefore, to confine certain competitions to amateurs. The corresponding prohibition is not needed in professional competitions nor even in the F.A. Challenge Cup in which both wholly professional and wholly amateur teams may compete; for to be successful in these events amateur players must have skills equivalent to those acquired by the professional.

239. Like many distinctions in theory, it is much less clear when looked at in practice. There is a spectrum which runs from the player earning £5,000 or more a year to the player who meets the whole of the cost of playing—outfit, travel, training and club equipment—out of his own pocket. In between there is the part-time professional who is paid the odd £1 or so a week over and above his out-of-pocket expenses; the “amateur” who receives all the expenses he claims without too many questions being asked; and the amateur who plays without cost to himself, being reimbursed by the club solely for his actual outgoings. In this in-between area the distinction between the two classes of players is in effect a distinction between those who gain and those who do not lose by playing football. A player may be provided with all his soccer outfit free, have all his travel and hotel expenses met, even if the team merely plays an odd game in some overseas holiday resort, but provided he cannot be shown to be in pocket as a result he remains an amateur.

240. In its evidence the F.A. said: “Drawing a strict line between amateurism and professionalism becomes very difficult, therefore, and is open to a number of interpretations”. The F.A. has examined the issue from time to time. In 1963 a committee was set up by the Council to investigate allegations of payments to amateur players. They reported that there was no doubt in their minds “that payments were being made to amateur players”, but went on to say that “no one was able to produce proof of such payment”. The committee were unanimous that a determined attempt should be made to preserve amateur status for the vast majority of footballers “who, judged by whatever strict rules might apply, would always be amateur, as the term is generally understood”. They proposed, therefore, more stringent penalties and the signing of a statement by the Chairman, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary of each club in the Amateur Cup that no player was “receiving or will receive, either directly or indirectly, any payment or any expenses over and above those which are permitted by Rule 25”. The introduction of this statutory declaration, however, led to some new problems and did not settle the major issue.

241. In September 1965, therefore, a committee composed of equal representation of the F.A. and the Football League were asked to examine the con-

sequences of the removal of the classification of players as Amateurs and Professionals "should such a step be taken". After hearing the views of a number of senior leagues, amateur and professional, they came to the conclusion that the removal of the existing classification would not be acceptable to members of the F.A. and that in any case to substitute the description "players" would not, of itself, remedy the existing abuses. The committee recommended the abolition of the statutory declaration and instead proposed that every amateur player should be required to sign a standard declaration, upon signing on for a senior club, that he was an amateur player as defined: "An Amateur player is one who has not signed a Professional form, or who has not directly, or indirectly, received for playing football, remuneration or consideration of any kind beyond his necessary hotel and travelling expenses actually paid, or loss of wages involved in attending trials with a Professional Club. . . ." These and certain other proposals were subsequently ratified by the Annual General Meeting of the Association. One member of the committee, Professor Sir Harold Thompson, a man with a very wide knowledge of the amateur game at the senior level and now Vice-Chairman of the Association, regretted he could not sign the report, for the recommendations in his opinion "do not face sufficiently realistically, nor take a sufficiently progressive line towards the real problems of present day amateur football".

242. Like the F.A. Committee of 1963 there is no doubt in our minds that payments are being made to amateur players in England, but equally we cannot produce proof. Increasing pressure to achieve success in the Amateur Cup and the senior amateur leagues is likely to cause "shamateurism" to get worse, until at some time it may even come to be an open secret. We fully accept the view of the F.A. that shamateurism is but a very small part of the game. It is our strong impression, however, that it is most likely to be found among senior amateur clubs competing in the leagues under the jurisdiction of the F.A. The Association, therefore, is indirectly implicated and must either make a real effort to collect the necessary evidence and take strong action, or do something to bring its rules into line with current practice.

243. It is pertinent to ask why senior amateur clubs and players should break Rule 25. The answer is possibly to be found in a mixture of motives. On the one hand, in some quarters there still exists the marked difference in status between the amateur and professional. This is reinforced by the freedom of the amateur to move from club to club compared with the registered professional who can move only with his club's permission, and then perhaps only as part of a financial transaction. On the other hand there are few, if any, competitions open to the partially professional club in England. The possession of one professional player by a club, even if he were to receive only £1 a week, debars it from taking part in the Amateur Cup and from membership of the senior Amateur Leagues. Thus, in recent years, several clubs having found it increasingly difficult to conceal their non-amateur character, have had to move into the Southern League or some other professional league. Here they find themselves competing with largely professional teams and their chance of success is thus limited, unless they also become fully professional. If this analysis is true no progress will be made towards eradicating shamateurism until there is a more balanced view of the relative sporting status of amateur and professional players and, more important, until suitable cup and league competitions exist for clubs of this kind.

244. In Scotland they have a somewhat different attitude. True, players are either amateurs or professionals and the definition of an amateur is on all fours with the English definition. But very few professionals are full-time—about 500 out of 3,500. Another 400 earn up to £5 a week but the great bulk are paid much less. The dividing line between being a full professional and just a professional is 10s. a week—a player who receives 10s. or over is a full professional; if he receives 9s. 11d. or less he is a professional. There are some 1,600 players in the latter category and some 700–800 “full” professionals who get little more than 10s. a week. This is in very marked contrast to the situation in England, where apparently such small “earnings” or “gains” would in some quarters hardly be regarded as endangering a man’s amateur status.

245. As a result, in Scotland the distinction between professional and amateur is much less sharp, and they play together in many of the main competitions. There is thus not the same need for the “permit” player system and indeed there is no provision for it in Scotland, though the Scottish F.A. may reinstate a professional as an amateur in certain limited circumstances.

246. We think that English football will have to move in the direction of having more leagues and competitions open to both amateur and professional clubs, or to amateurs and what may be termed “semi-professionals”. The initiative for this change will have to come from one or two of the senior amateur leagues, probably with the help of the F.A. The Amateur Cup is a major obstacle in the way of such a change. Success in it can mean a great deal to a club both financially and in prestige. Leagues would be more encouraged to become open if their clubs could still take part in the “Amateur” Cup or in a national cup competition which would soon replace it in status.

247. It might help in this development if a new category of player were permitted who would be called either a semi-professional or, more neutrally, a Form Z player. He would be allowed to be registered by clubs in all leagues under the jurisdiction of the F.A., provided the appropriate league committee wished it. He would not be allowed to be paid more than, say, £10 a week and would, for purposes of registration and transfer, be much more akin to the present amateur than the professional. Some cups and leagues could then be open to all players, some to amateurs and “semi-professionals” and some only to amateurs. The scope of the intermediate sector would probably expand once the F.A. made a suitable national cup available and a senior amateur league had the courage to make the change.

248. The F.A. should put no obstacles in the way of any league (whether directly under its jurisdiction or under that of a County F.A.) converting to an open league. At the same time we are clear that a large part of the game will wish to remain wholly amateur and we would not like to see any change which harmed the truly amateur game. The game is large enough to accommodate a variety of competitions—some completely open, some confined to particular categories of player. It should be left to those who run each league or competition to decide the kind of clubs allowed to play in it.

249. Selection of the Olympic team could still be made according to the Olympic rules governing amateur status. The players chosen would, as now, have to sign the necessary declarations and ultimately take the Olympic oath. But before long it is possible that the interpretation of the rules by other countries,

in football and all sports, may have resulted in a move towards a more open Olympic competition.

250. To sum up this section of our Report. **We recommend** the Football Association:

- (i) To recognise that Rule 25, governing payments to amateurs, is broken regularly by many senior amateur clubs and players, and to frame future policy accordingly rather than either make occasional efforts to enforce the rule or continue to ignore its infringement.
- (ii) To permit leagues and competitions under its jurisdiction to have a new category of player—called a “semi-professional” or Form Z player—who could receive up to say, £10 a week, but whose registration and transfer would be much freer and simpler than those of the full professional.
- (iii) To encourage one or two of the senior amateur leagues under its jurisdiction either to become open to both amateurs and professionals, or to amateurs and Form Z players, if the arrangement under (ii) is accepted. To this end the Amateur Cup, suitably renamed, should be made open, possibly excluding League clubs, or a new national cup competition should be established to cater for “intermediate” clubs.

251. These changes should bring with them changes in the attitude towards permit players. In any case, **we recommend** that Rule 30 (Permit to play without remuneration) should be rescinded. If a player has ceased to be registered for a club as a professional, he should be deemed to have reverted to amateur status.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

252. Professional players in England and Wales are represented in general negotiations by the Professional Footballers Association and in Scotland by the Scottish Professional Footballers Association. Present membership of the former body is approximately 2,500, the fee being 2s. 6d. a week. In addition to negotiations of the typical trade union kind, the P.F.A. gives members advice about their contracts, deals with settlements under the Industrial Injuries Acts and may help a player to get an engagement upon the expiry of his contract. In recent years the P.F.A. has been a militant body and has gained several notable benefits for its members: the abolition of the maximum wage in 1960, after threat of strike action, and the major changes in the retention and transfer system following the High Court decision in the Eastham case (Eastham being supported by the P.F.A.). Its relations with the League and the F.A. are now much better than they were and are probably no better and no worse than the relations which exist between employers and union representatives in many other industries. The same is true in Scotland.

253. There are, however, certain features which distinguish these relations from most employer-employee relations. For one thing all players' contracts are individually negotiated; the young, famous, much sought-after player in the First Division bargains from great strength, whereas the older player, with declining powers, may be glad within limits to take what he is offered. Salary negotiations are undertaken by individual players in a highly competitive but limited market. The only role that the players' union can play is to try and

secure that certain general conditions are observed. Again, the professional working life of the footballer is much shorter than in most professions. The player may reach the peak of his earnings quite early in his career and may be finished by the age of 35 or even earlier so far as first class football is concerned. The union, therefore, has the peculiar problem of watching over the interests of boys at one end and of men whose careers finish in the early thirties at the other. In the middle most players should be able to look after themselves. A third difference is that many aspects of the rules governing the playing of football may affect the remuneration and conditions of professional players without the connection being direct or obvious. Thus a decision by the F.A. to alter the length of the playing season may be taken in the interests of the game as a whole, whereas to the professional player it may appear to be a change in his contract of service.

254. Our attention has been called to two general elements in the pay and conditions of League players: the Provident Fund and the Players' Accident Insurance Scheme. The Provident Fund was established by the League in 1949. At the moment it is fed from two sources. The League pays 10 per cent on the annual earnings of each player (provided these are less than £2,000) and since 1967 a levy of 5 per cent (with a minimum of £250) on all transfer fees going into it. The amounts are accumulated in the names of individual players, who may claim them on the 1st January after their 35th birthday, if by then they have ceased to be League club players, or on retirement. In order to have the approval of the Inland Revenue the scheme has to be confined to players earning less than £2,000 a year and the amount accumulated cannot exceed £100 a year. The scheme now costs the League some £80,000-£100,000 a year.

255. The present Players' Accident Insurance Scheme, which replaced an earlier scheme, insures the club against having to pay a player even though he is injured and cannot play, and the club and the player against the termination of a playing career due to injury. Payment to the injured player is usually at the rate of £20 a week, though of course the club may add to this. In the event of the injury ending a player's career, a club may receive a capital payment of up to £20,000, depending on the value agreed to be attached to the player, and the player may receive up to £750. The annual premium is some £150,000 a year.

256. Neither scheme is satisfactory and neither takes advantage of the opportunities offered by modern insurance facilities. The Provident Fund is really a relic of times when players were poorly paid. **We recommend** that it should be converted into a modern contributory pension scheme. Arrangements could be made for a lump sum to be payable on retirement from League football, to help the player's transition to another occupation, and a deferred pension payable at, say, the age of 60-65. A substantial death benefit could be included in the scheme. It should also be possible to provide a "Top Hat" policy for the higher paid professionals. The details and the relative contributions of the League, the clubs and the players would need to be negotiated. The day-to-day management of the new Fund would have to be in the hands of an independent trust on which both the League and the P.F.A. were represented.

257. **We also recommend** that a new Accident Insurance scheme should be devised, based on the undeniable fact that it is impossible for the player to insure himself against accident whilst playing, except at a very high premium. Collective insurance is therefore essential for both clubs and players. A scheme

could be devised which would give players much greater financial security against loss of income through injury, provide a reasonable death benefit for a player's widow, and be more financially advantageous to clubs.

258. The Scottish League has neither a Provident nor an Accident scheme. Though its financial resources are much more limited and Scottish conditions are somewhat different, nevertheless **we recommend** that the Scottish League should have contributory pension and accident schemes. There should be full transferability between the English and Scottish League schemes.

259. During the course of our enquiry we have come across instances of clubs adopting an attitude towards their players or an individual player which showed neither generosity of spirit nor an appreciation of the great change that has come over the relations between employers and employees in recent years. Most clubs are, of course, excellent employers and the general standard has risen in recent years. This is all the more reason why the League Management Committee, and the good employing clubs, should make clear their disapproval of the actions of any clubs towards a player or players which are arbitrary, unfair or ungenerous.

THE TRANSFER SYSTEM

260. The system whereby one club may demand the payment of a fee from another club which desires to sign on one of its professional players is deeply rooted in football, but is very rare in other professional occupations. It is not confined to the League but is used for all professional players in England, Scotland and Wales. It is based on two elements: registration and contract.

261. Every professional player in England must be registered with the F.A. and by the Football League if he is employed by a League club. Neither body is compelled to accept an application for registration. The League, for example, scrutinises the player's contract to see whether it conforms to their rules and may refuse registration if it does not. Application for registration is made by a club, not by a player. Registration is not a permit to play—it is a permit to play for a particular club. No player can be registered for two clubs at the same time. Movement of players between clubs involves the transfer of the player's registration from the name of the one club to the name of the other and is only permissible with the approval of the F.A. and the League. The application must be signed by the player and both clubs. In other words, the club already holding the player's registration must agree to the transfer.

262. Every professional player must have a contract with his club. The contract sets out the terms and conditions of his employment. Much of it is common to all professional players—indeed, there is a standard form which must be used. But the clauses about his basic wage, payment for the club's success in League or Cup, and other financial arrangements, may be peculiar to him and are the result of his personal negotiations with the club. At present contracts must provide for an initial period and an option period, the option being at the discretion of the club. The second period must be equal to or not longer than the initial period, and one year for each is usual, though periods of two or occasionally three years also occur. Once he has signed this contract and he has been registered in the name of that club, he cannot sign for any other League club without permission of that club even when the initial and option periods are completed. In other words, neither the F.A. nor the League will accept transfer of his registration

without the application for transfer being signed by his present club. The contract is thus enforced not by ordinary legal action for breach of contract but by collective action on the part of the League and the national association. Moreover, no club under the jurisdiction of a national association affiliated to the International Federation of Football Associations (virtually the whole of the football world) may play a player in any major competition who has not been certified by his national association as having been released by the club for whom he is registered.

263. A transfer fee, therefore, is a fee paid by one club to another permitting a player's registration to be transferred in the records of the F.A. and the League. Transfer may occur either during the period of the contract or when it comes up for renewal. In the former case the fee is in effect compensation for breaking a contract, in the latter it is a pure transfer fee. On either occasion, however, the more reluctant the one club is to part with a player and the more eager the other is to secure him, the higher the fee the former will demand and the latter be willing to pay.

264. A contract is used, of course, in most forms of employment in public entertainment. It is also found in many skilled professions. It is an individual bargain. One party agrees to make certain payments and the other agrees to perform certain functions. Such a contract is most likely to be used where skills or talents are in short supply and the employing party wants to make certain that he will not lose his catch to some competitor. The "employer" enters into commitment for a period on the assumption that the skill of the other party will remain, while the "employee" is prepared to give up his freedom to work for somebody else during that period in return for certainty of employment at what he regards as adequate remuneration. Granted the need for some form of contract, does it follow that the existing transfer system is right and proper?

265. Until quite recently the arrangements for the renewal of contracts were distinctly unfair to many players. They worked like this: supposing the player was engaged under a yearly contract from 1st July to 30th June, the following possibilities existed as the year drew to an end:

- (i) The player could again be registered for his own club between 1st April and the first Saturday in May, i.e. his contract was renewed.
- (ii) He could be retained by his club.
- (iii) He could be placed on the transfer list at a fee fixed by the club.
- (iv) If none of these three steps was taken by the club, he was free at the end of June to sign for another club.

266. If the club adopted the second course they had to give the player notice of this between 1st May and the first Saturday in June, and the notice had to state the wages the club were prepared to pay, which could not be less than at the rate of £416 per annum but could be lower than his existing wages. If the player refused to re-sign on the terms offered, or if no other club was willing to pay the transfer fee demanded for him, he still remained the registered player of the retaining club. Subject to appeal to the League Management Committee, a player could be held indefinitely in this position—neither under contract to his club nor allowed to sign for another club. If he were placed on the transfer list his club was under no obligation to pay him any wages; he could, however,

sign for a non-League club, and some professional clubs just below League level obtained many of their players in this way. But if his club paid him the minimum wage he could not sign even for a non-League club.

267. In 1963, as a result of the Eastham case,⁽¹⁾ the League adopted new rules which are a distinct improvement on the old retention and transfer system. The arrangements are now as follows. At the end of the playing season (end of May) a club must state which players it proposes to retain and which it is placing on the transfer list. If a player is on neither list he is at liberty to sign for any other club at the end of the contract period.

268. If the club proposes to retain the player he is given 28 days to say whether or not he accepts the terms offered. If he does not so inform the club he is deemed to have accepted the offer. If he has not re-signed by 30th June a dispute between club and player is deemed to exist. Thereupon either party may appeal to the Management Committee of the League who are required to adjudicate by not later than 31st July. If the player still has not re-signed, i.e. agreed to his retention, by 31st August, either party may appeal to a newly established Independent Tribunal which is required to determine the dispute by not later than 30th September, and club or player may demand a personal hearing. During all this period the player's employment must continue under the terms of contract just terminated, i.e. he continues to draw wages according to the contract, not as previously at a lower or minimum rate. The player may appeal on any grounds, e.g. inadequacy of the wages, bonuses, etc., proposed, his relations with the club or the size of the transfer fee should he wish to leave the club.

269. Players placed on the "open to transfer" list may be given a free transfer or the club may stipulate that a transfer fee is required. Nowadays the great bulk of players placed on the transfer list at the end of the season are given a free transfer. At 27th May, 1967, for example, 465 players were listed by the League as being open to transfer, of whom only 55 had a transfer fee placed on them.⁽²⁾ A free transfer means that the player ceases to receive wages from his club as soon as the period of his contract ends, usually 30th June. If a transfer fee is stipulated the player may regard this as too high, i.e. as reducing his chance of being signed on by another club, in which case he may appeal in the same way as the retained player. Similarly until the transfer is made or, if there is a dispute, until that is settled, the player must continue to be paid according to the terms of his existing contract.

(1) Mr. Justice Wilberforce decided that the rules of the Football Association and the Regulations of the Football League relating to retention and transfer of professional footballers were in "unreasonable restraint of trade and *ultra vires*" and were therefore not binding on Mr. George Eastham, then playing for Newcastle United (Eastham v Newcastle United Football Club Limited and others, 4th July 1963).

(2) *Open to Transfer List, 27th May, 1967*

	<i>Free</i>	<i>Fee</i>	<i>Total</i>
1st Division	57	18	75
2nd "	63	9	72
3rd "	129	16	145
4th "	161	12	173
	410	55	465

Source: Football League—Re-engagement and Transfer List.

270. These changes maintain the contracted wages and conditions of a player during a period of dispute and provide him with an independent appeal body if he is not satisfied with the renewal terms offered him by his club. The Independent Tribunal is composed of an independent Chairman (Lord Henderson at the moment) and the Secretaries of the League and the P.F.A.—so he has his own trade union representative on the appeal body. But they still leave with the club the decision whether or not to renew. The contract does not end, only the terms for the next period are in question. This is why quite short period renewals, one year at a time, are popular.

271. The changes in the retention and transfer system, combined with the big increase in wages consequent upon the abolition of the maximum wage, have greatly reduced the number of players retained at the end of the season and increased the number given a free transfer. The numbers reported to the Football League were as in Table 10.

TABLE 10
FOOTBALL LEAGUE PLAYERS PLACED ON TRANSFER LIST AT END OF
SEASONS 1962-67

<i>June</i>	<i>No. of registered professionals</i>	<i>Transfer fee required</i>	<i>Percentage of Total %</i>	<i>Free Transfers</i>	<i>Percentage of Total %</i>
1962	2,640	192	7.3	296	11.2
1963	2,511	179	7.1	317	12.6
1964	2,466	214	8.7	355	14.4
1965	2,415	86	3.6	489	20.2
1966	2,384	70	2.9	480	20.1
1967	2,395	55	2.3	410	17.1

This change has meant greater freedom for the player. But unless another club is prepared to offer him a contract at least as good as that offered by his existing club it is freedom bought at the expense of his pocket. The bulk of the free transfers are in the Third and Fourth Division: 331 out of 489 in 1965, 328 out of 480 in 1966 and 290 out of 410 in 1967. These are the clubs most in need of money who would have been unlikely to put so many players on free transfer if they had seen an opportunity of obtaining a fee for them. Even where a fee is demanded it may be comparatively small—in many cases less than £2,000.

272. It will be seen that notwithstanding a decline in the total number of players involved, the proportion of players given a free transfer has markedly increased and the proportion held subject to transfer fee has markedly decreased.

273. Most transfer fees, and certainly most of the large fees, occur in quite different circumstances. A club needing to strengthen its team during the season may approach one or more clubs to release a player. Thus in 1966 Manchester United, having decided that the competitive performance of their team could be improved if they had a better goalkeeper, approached Chelsea for the release of A. C. Stepney. Chelsea had another first class goalkeeper, agreed, and Stepney was transferred in September 1966 for a fee of £52,000. Stepney was at the beginning of his contract with Chelsea, having been transferred in the summer

from Millwall for £50,000, and there was no question of his being on either the retained or the transfer list. Many of the transfers with large fees are of this kind, i.e. are clearly within the period of a player's contractual relationship with his club and not at the time of its renewal. It should also be noticed that Stepney's transfer proved to be very good business for Manchester United, being a factor in their becoming League Champions and therefore qualifying for the lucrative European Cup.

274. One other feature in the working of the transfer system deserves analysis before we come to our recommendation. One advantage of the present system stressed by the League was that "there is a flow of money from one Club to another, (which) never goes out of the game, and in many cases . . . helps a Club financially worse off than a Club paying for the transfer". To test this we analysed the information provided by the Football League from its records of the fees paid by their clubs from May 1964 to October 1966. The results are shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11
TRANSFERS BETWEEN CLUBS IN DIFFERENT DIVISIONS OF THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE,
MAY 1964-OCTOBER 1966

<i>Paid to:</i>	<i>Number of Transfers from</i>		<i>Paid by:</i>	<i>Number of Transfers to</i>		<i>Net Balance</i>
		£			£	
First	160	1,233,615	First	34	915,050	Gain 318,565
Second	103	1,026,275	Second	91	1,097,625	Loss 71,350
Third	74	586,480	Third	156	910,010	Loss 323,530
Fourth	47	311,250	Fourth	103	234,935	Gain 76,315
	384	£3,157,620		384	£3,157,620	—

- (i) The Table conceals one important aspect of the transfer system—the large sums paid by English to Scottish League clubs. During this period some £500,000 was received by Scottish clubs for players moving south, mainly to First Division clubs. Three of these involved fees of over £70,000 each. Some £40,000 was paid to Irish League clubs, mainly by First Division clubs. If these payments are taken into account the net profit of £318,000 shown in the Table for First Division clubs is turned into a net outgoing of some £200,000.
- (ii) The Table excludes transfers between clubs in the same Division. During the same period these were as in Table 12.

TABLE 12
TRANSFERS BETWEEN CLUBS IN THE SAME DIVISIONS OF THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE,
MAY 1964-OCTOBER 1966

	<i>No.</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Average Transfer Fee</i>
		£	£
First to First	43	1,249,937	29,000
Second to Second	53	668,405	12,600
Third to Third	44	238,400	5,400
Fourth to Fourth	27	54,450	2,000
	167	£2,211,192	—

- (iii) Tables 11 and 12 exclude other payments a club may make in the course of a transfer, e.g. signing on fees, purchase of house for the new player, etc.

275. The first point to make is that the process of transfer is downwards rather than upward. There was a net exit of 126 players from the First and 12 from the Second Division, and a net gain of 82 by the Third and of 56 by the Fourth Divisions. In more detail, of the 160 players transferred from the First Division, 52 went to the Second and 80 to the Third. Of the 103 who were transferred from the Second, 84 went to either Third or Fourth Division clubs and only 19 went to First. Of the 74 transferred from the Third 40 went to the Fourth and only 11 to the First. According to the P.F.A., of 1,488 transfers within the Football League during the five seasons 1961-62 to 1965-66 only 206 were from lower to higher Divisions, the great majority (848) were in the reverse direction.

276. In cash terms the movement is less pronounced, for the players moving upward naturally are more valuable than those moving to a lower Division. (The First Division clubs paid an average of £27,000 for each of the 34 players they recruited from the other three Divisions, whereas the Fourth Division clubs paid an average fee of only £2,300 for their 103 recruits from the higher Divisions.) Even so, it quite clearly emerges that the transfer system was a source of profit for First Division clubs during this period and put the Third Division clubs more deeply in the red. There is no evidence here that the system results in money passing from the richer to the poorer Divisions. On the other hand there are clubs who would find it difficult to make ends meet but for the profit on the transfer of players. Burnley is an often quoted example. During the period covered by the Table, Burnley, a struggling club financially, was reported to have gained over £15,000 from transfer fees, and another such club, Bradford (Park Avenue), was reported to have received £33,000 for the transfer of one player.

277. The press highlight the big transfer fees: for example, during this period the £100,000 paid by Everton to Blackpool for A. Ball, the £95,000 paid by Tottenham Hotspurs to Blackburn Rovers for H. M. England. But of the 551 transfers registered with the Football League as having taken place between League clubs in the period May 1964 to October 1966 more than half were for less than £5,000. Of the 56 fees recorded at £25,000 and over, 23, including most of the largest, were paid by one First Division club to another, and another 16 were between First and Second Division clubs, those in the Second Division having been recently members of the First. Only one Fourth and seven Third Division players were involved in transfer fees of £25,000 or more.

278. Whatever may have been the position at one time it is not now the case that the lower Divisions are the nursery for the First or Second Divisions and that transfer money flows accordingly from the top to the bottom. In recent years most First Division clubs have developed a network of talent scouts. Every representative schoolboy or youth game is bound to attract a number of such scouts. Promising youngsters are signed as Associated Schoolboys and later as Apprentices. The glamour, not to mention the extra money available to the big names in the First or Second Divisions, attracts young talent. Should the boy make good he may become one of the famous headline names. Should he not quite make the top grade he may filter down to a lower division club,

with some of the glamour and the training and experience with the big club adding to his market value. Even if a very promising boy signs for a lower division club it is not easy for him to attract attention unless, for example, he is a spectacular goal scorer. Nor does he have the advantage of playing with the top talent and therefore his own potential may never be fully realised. One other factor is age. Football demands an exceedingly high degree of physical toughness and speed of reaction. As players grow older some find it difficult to maintain their team position in face of competition from younger players. Many of these, rather than play in the reserves, prefer to play for a first team in a lower division.

279. Put in its simplest, and therefore over-generalised form, the flow of transfers is as follows. The top division clubs hope to obtain most of their players by recruiting able schoolboys, apprentices or even amateurs. But when they feel badly in need of a player to fill a particular position they are prepared to pay a high fee to acquire his transfer. Most of these "expensive" players come either from outside the League, mainly from Scotland, or from other senior League clubs. In contrast, the lower division clubs are more likely to recruit their players from the higher divisions for transfer fees which are much lower individually, but which in total add up to quite a sum. If they do manage to recruit a very skilled player as a schoolboy or in some other cheap way, they are unlikely to be able to keep him, either because he will be attracted to play for a more famous club or because they are not in the position to resist the offer of a high transfer fee for him.

280. We now return to the future of the retention and transfer system. It is clear that if a club could obtain no consideration for releasing one of its good players from contract it would be much less willing to let him go. The transfer fee system is thus essential for the flexibility of the present contract system. To abolish the former without abolishing the latter would be fairly meaningless. Yet the contract system obviously has advantages for both players and clubs. It enables the club to get together and keep a team and the player to feel reasonably secure, notwithstanding injury or loss of form. Is there a way, therefore, of obtaining these advantages and yet removing any disagreeable feature of the present system?

281. The questionable feature of the present contract is that the option of renewal lies in effect with the club only. Originally every contract is freely negotiated between club and player. Rule 27(a) of the F.A. provides that the contract must contain an option, exercisable in writing by the club before the last day of the playing season, for renewal on terms not less favourable to the player than those in the original period and for a period not longer than the original period. The same rule governs the relations between the club and the player if the club decides to exercise its option to renew the contract for a further period. The renewal carries with it a right exercisable at the option of the club to renew at no less favourable conditions and for a period not longer than the one just ending. The only difference between the original contract and its renewal is this. If the club does not wish to exercise its option at the end of the initial period the player is automatically free to sign for any other club without any transfer fee being involved. In the case of subsequent renewals the arrangements outlined in paragraphs 267-268 apply. Contracts are usually for an initial period of one year and are therefore renewable at the option of the club on a yearly basis.

282. It is at the end of the first renewal period, and then at each subsequent renewal, that a somewhat different element enters into the contractual relationship. For in effect it is only the terms of the contract that are at issue. Even if the club does not wish to continue the contract it does not automatically come to an end, the club may stipulate that it will only let the player go to another club, i.e. agree to the transfer of his registration, if a certain transfer fee is forthcoming. If the player does not wish to remain with the club at the end of the period he nevertheless has no choice but to do so if the club does not wish to let him go. The Rules of the F.A. give only the club an option, not the player. True, when he signs the original contract the player knows the rule about subsequent renewals, but if he wishes to play in League football he has no choice, for the contractual relationship is collectively enforced by the League and the F.A.

283. In practice this statement is subject to two very important qualifications. For one thing the player may appeal first to the Management Committee and then to the Independent Tribunal, and the club knows this. In many cases his appeal will be favourably received. As a result, either the renewal terms offered by the club will be improved or the transfer fee will be reduced. For another, a club cannot for long keep a player who is clearly dissatisfied and strongly desires to go elsewhere. It will be reflected in his play and his co-operation. Nevertheless, neither of these limitations produces exactly the same conditions as would complete freedom to negotiate a fresh contract. The appeal is likely to involve some element of compromise and leave the player feeling that he might have done better had he been completely free to bargain. Dissatisfaction which is reflected in play is not likely to enhance a player's reputation either with other clubs or his team mates, and is anyhow something which most good players would wish to avoid.

284. We think the essential feature of the contract system could be secured without retaining all the features of the present contract. We can appreciate the value to the club and to the player, and indeed to the game as a whole, of having professional players in formal contractual relationship with their clubs. But a contract which is renewable indefinitely on a year to year basis at the option of one of the parties seems to us to go beyond the normal contractual relationship and to be more one-sided than the situation demands. In general we are against one-way options unless freely negotiated. We recommend that every contract between club and player should be for a definite period at the end of which either party should be free to renew it.

285. Once our recommendation comes fully into force each contract will have to have a terminal date and be renewable only with the consent of both parties. A club afraid of losing a player will bargain for a longish period—say four, five or seven years. A player keen on security will bargain similarly. In other words the period of the contract, including any initial and renewal periods, will be open to bargaining just as much as wages and conditions are at the moment. At the end of the agreed period, both parties being entirely free, the contract will in most cases be renewed for a further period by mutual consent. But neither the player nor the club will be under any legal obligation to renew. If the contract is not renewed, whether at the club's instance or at the player's, the player will not require the permission of his club to sign for another club. Put another way, at the end of the contract the player's registration will cease to be the property

of the club. During the period of the contract, however, a player can only transfer at the wish or with the permission of his club.

286. The recommendation has two general advantages. On the one hand it will provide a better moral basis for the transfer system. Much as the Football League may say that the transfer system is not the buying and selling of men but a payment for the release from contract, the facts are against them. Fees can be demanded for players who have fulfilled the agreed period with their clubs and whose clubs no longer want them. The transaction may be wrapped up in the jargon of registrations, but in effect it is a payment for a man and is enforced by the overwhelming monopoly power of the F.A. and the League. The basis of the fee in the new system would be clear, for payment could occur only within the period of the contract.

287. On the other hand the new system would add to the dignity of the professional player. He would enter into a contract with a club knowing that, when he had fulfilled it, he, as well as the club, would be free. The club could not hold on to him in order to get a transfer fee, but equally the club would have no responsibility to continue to pay him after the end of the contract period. When entering into a contract he would have to make up his mind whether he should bargain for a long period with the resulting security, or for a short period with the resulting freedom of action. He would do this, however, as a free agent and in the light of his relative bargaining power.

288. It is obvious that acceptance of this recommendation would markedly alter the present attitude of both parties to contracts. At the moment the year to year renewal performs two functions. First it gives the club a chance to get rid of a player by not placing him on its retained list, and if need be demanding nothing for the transfer of his registration. In other words it need not renew his contract. Second, it provides an opportunity for both sides to review the terms and conditions of the contract. The player may demand a higher basic wage or bonus, the club may ask the player to accept a lower wage or bonus as a condition of renewal. If both sides agree the new contract, or rather the renewed contract, is amicably signed.

289. Clubs have two extreme fears—of losing their good players and of being committed to keep their poor players. The former fear implies a long contract, the latter a short one. The present short term—one-way option—meets both fears and we could very well understand if clubs were reluctant to give up the present, and it must be admitted, much fairer system of transfer and retention from the players' standpoint.

290. The recommendation will no doubt be strongly criticised by some directors and meet the kind of opposition which only the Eastham Judgment overcame to the changes being discussed in 1962-63. In particular we anticipate two criticisms—that the change would place clubs at the mercy of players and would lose them the money they had invested in players. These are very serious points and both would have strength if the change were to be introduced quickly before management had had time to work out the implications and to design a new form of contract.

291. We appreciate that clubs have a good deal of money invested in players and have arranged their affairs on the basis of the existing form of contract. The new arrangement could either be brought in piecemeal, e.g. by requiring

that say after 1969, the contracts of all new signings be in accordance with the new rule or all at once, by stipulating that after a certain date, say 1973, all new contracts must have a terminal date.

292. Assuming that clubs and players adjusted their attitudes to the new rule how might the new system work? We do not think it should lead to much more movement than occurs at the moment. The mass of players stay with their clubs because they are reasonably well treated, have local associations and would not materially better themselves if they moved elsewhere. Even under the present system a large number of players are given free or very low transfers when their clubs decide not to renew their contracts. Indeed we suspect that at the end of the season there are more players anxious whether they will be retained than worried about the terms offered to them. These would not be affected by the change, and towards the end of a player's active life the year-to-year contract would probably remain.

293. The big differences in practice would be twofold. Instead of as at present, a player dissatisfied with the terms offered for the renewal of his contract having to appeal to the Management Committee and even to an Independent Tribunal he would be free to negotiate an entirely new contract with his existing club, or failing that, be free to try for a better contract with another club. Whether this freedom amounted to much would depend on the player's bargaining power—a player with attractive offers from other clubs would obviously be in a strong bargaining position. If, however, the new rule led to the adoption of longer contract periods for many players, some provision might have to be made for a revision of the financial terms from time to time, similar to the arrangement for the revision of rents in leases. In case of dispute the League would have to provide some machinery for arbitration and no doubt the present Independent Tribunal could be used in this way.

294. The second, and much bigger difference, would be that towards the end of a player's contract his transfer value would decline to zero. For when the contract ended the club, having no longer any hold on him, would have nothing to sell. At the moment it is of little advantage to a club anxious to secure the services of an able player to wait until the end of the playing season; it may as well make a bid for him and have the value of his services during the current season. Under the new arrangement the nearer the contract of a player came to its terminal date, the less inclined clubs would be to make an offer for his transfer. They would have to balance the urgency of their need against the possibility of avoiding payment of a transfer fee.

295. Again, the bargaining to secure the signing of a fresh contract would be undertaken in the knowledge that no transfer fee would be payable. This could have two effects. On the one hand, the club most anxious to secure the player's signature might be willing to offer him much more generous terms than they would under the present rules because they would not also have to pay a fee to his club. On the other hand, the new club would not necessarily be acquiring an asset, for only if the player left during the period of his contract would they get any payment for him.

296. Those clubs which are worried that the new arrangement would reduce their income from transfers should bear in mind that it would operate both ways. It would mean fewer transfer fees to receive and to pay. But with contracts being

offered for a longer period, with suitable arrangements for adjustment of terms during the period, most of the big transfer fees would continue, for they would take place during the period of the contract. Good managers, given time, will we think, be able to work the new arrangement to safeguard the interests of their clubs.

297. The position in Scotland is very similar and our recommendation would apply there. But we must confess we are worried about the effect on the finances of Scottish football of allowing the new rule to apply to transfers between England and Scotland. For a long time the movement of professional players from Scotland to England was limited by the maximum wage in England, there being no such maximum in Scotland. The very high wages now offered by English First Division and even Second Division clubs, and the greater prosperity of English football, has caused an increased movement of top Scottish players to England and a movement of League club money to Scotland. This money is a major element in the financial viability of the Scottish League club. In so far as a Scot moved during the period of his contract the money would still flow north. But few Scottish clubs could offer terms as favourable as the player would get from an English club and players who wanted to move south would be reluctant to sign long contracts. In any case, the very good player who came to the end of his contract would sign for an English club without Scottish football receiving for him what they would under the present transfer and retention system.

298. In so far as other countries also operate a transfer system the same threat might occur to English football. The League might be faced with a situation in which an English player had been recruited by an Italian club without fee at the end of his contract, yet when he wished to return to England the Italian club demanded a large fee for him. As more and more club competitions become European, or cover even wider areas, the competition between countries for top players will increase in intensity. At some stage F.I.F.A. will have to work out a fair system of transfers between clubs in different countries. Until then we **recommend** that the change recommended in paragraph 284 should not apply to movement of players between countries except in so far as the two countries concerned have entered into a reciprocal arrangement to apply the contract system in this new way.

299. The other aspect of the working of the transfer system in Scotland is its prevalence. In England it is found in the League and, to a much lesser degree, among the small number of professional clubs operating just below League level. In Scotland the making of quite small payments for the transfer of a player is common. Thus a Scottish League club signing on a Junior club player may have to pay £225, but sometimes as little as £20 or even £10 to the Junior club. The player might not even have played for the Junior club, or have played for it only briefly. The Junior club, for its part, is required to pay some small compensation to a club in the Scottish Secondary Juvenile Association, £12 if the player signed as a full professional and £6 if he signed with it as a semi-professional. These and similar small payments are obviously different in scale and kind to those found in the Football League and seem to be woven very closely into the tartan of Scottish football.

300. Finally, one other aspect of the transfer system caused us some concern—the increasingly large sums involved. Until quite recently £80,000–£100,000

seemed to be around the top figure, but in January 1968 Tottenham Hotspur paid the equivalent of £125,000 to Southampton for Martin Chivers. The present level is very much higher than the level of five years ago, even allowing for the fall in the value of money. The indications are that the level is likely to be much higher in another five years. The financial gains from having a successful team can be very great, particularly at the upper levels of the game. Over and above this, there is the glamour, excitement and pride in being Chairman or Director of the League champions or Cup winners or, perhaps even more important nowadays, of a successful team in one of the European competitions. Such clubs will always be in the market for the outstanding player whose acquisition would remedy some deficiency in their teams. Some will also have the money, for success has produced some half-a-dozen or so quite rich clubs. Even if they have not got the money at the moment they may judge, quite rightly, that they will soon get back the money they have had to borrow on the strength of the increased home attendances which flow from having a successful team.

301. Transfer fees paid by a club are an expense chargeable before its corporation tax is assessed and receipts from fees are treated as income for tax purposes. A club faced with large tax payments may well be inclined to reduce its profits, and even turn them into a loss, by purchasing a player. In contrast, no tax benefits would be gained if it were to spend the same sum on ground improvements. Not many League clubs pay corporation tax, for most lose money over a period of years, but those that do are the ones most likely, on other grounds, to be after the outstanding players.

302. We do not think it would be good for the game or the players if transfer fees continued to rise, so that instead of £80,000–£100,000 the top level reached say, £175,000–£200,000. For one thing, fees even at their present level place a heavy, indeed an impossible, responsibility on a player. They bewilder the general public and do harm to the image of the game, giving the impression that it has money to burn. Unfortunately, the remedy is not easy to find. The change proposed earlier should have the effect of reducing the total amount of money paid in transfer fees but large fees would still be payable during the period of a player's contract. Any maximum imposed by the League Management Committee would be difficult to police. Instead of one player being transferred for £200,000 a club could, for example, arrange to transfer, say, two or three players, one at the maximum and the others near it—the former being in effect under-valued in real market terms and the other(s) bearing fees inflated to make good the real value.

303. One solution is to make a special levy. The League already makes a levy of 10 per cent in respect of transfer fees, of which half goes to the player⁽¹⁾ and half to the League Provident Fund. This arrangement was introduced in 1967 along with a rule prohibiting the payment of signing-on bonuses—whether in cash or in kind. The levy is paid by the club to whom the player is transferred. **We recommend** that, over and above the current levy, a special levy at a rate graded according to the size of the fee should be levied by the League on their clubs on all fees over £25,000. It might be at the rate of say 5 per cent for fees between £25,000–£50,000, and 10 per cent on the next £25,000, and 15

⁽¹⁾ Assuming the transfer is at the club's request. If it is at the player's request, as it was in the case of Martin Chivers, he gets half only if he can satisfy the League Management Committee that his request is reasonable.

per cent on the remainder of the fee. In other words a fee of £100,000 would attract a special levy of £8,750, in addition to the general levy of £10,000. It would be payable by the club "purchasing" the player. The levy would offset to some extent the tax advantage which clubs incurring corporation tax have in the transfer market, and should therefore reduce their willingness to pay high fees. It ought to reduce the level of transfer fees, but if it did not the proceeds would improve the club grounds for **we also recommend** that the money so raised should be used by the League in the form of grants or low interest loans to improve ground facilities. On the information we have for 1964-66 the special levy could produce about £90,000 a year, no allowance being made for the effect of the new contract arrangements, if adopted.

304. In the case of players transferred from Scottish League clubs the levy would be payable to the Scottish League and be used for the same purpose.

CHAPTER V

REFEREES, LINESMEN AND DISCIPLINE

REFEREES

305. A football match is played by 22 players in accordance with well defined and fairly straightforward Laws. It must be assumed to be the wish of all the players that the Laws are clearly and fairly interpreted. If they are not then one team may gain an advantage which has repercussions throughout the game. The referee is thus a key figure in any game but basically his authority stems from the assumption that the players wish to abide by the Laws and, if they break them, are ready to be penalised. This should be true of football at all levels. When in addition to being a sporting contest between two teams it is an entertainment for thousands of spectators, the referee's role becomes even more important. It is in his power to see that the entertainment is the best available according to the talent on display. He can make or mar the game in the opening minutes, when firm ruling is essential; he can, by his personality, impress upon the players the necessity for a clean exhibition of football, thus ensuring enjoyment for players and spectators.

306. In view of his importance it is necessary to trace the arduous path of apprenticeship the referee has to follow before he becomes a Class 1 referee. The County Associations carry the responsibility for recruiting, coaching and grading referees. The Football Association has regulations for their guidance but Associations are left wide discretion and their practices vary. Each Association normally has a Referees Committee on which it is usual nowadays to co-opt a local member of the Referees' Association. This committee organises classes and examinations for aspiring referees. Successful candidates receive a Class 3 certificate and are placed on the County's list of recognised referees. The initial examination is a test of knowledge of the Laws of the Game, but may include trials as referee or linesman at which a candidate's ability in controlling a game is observed. His early games are those involving schoolboys or youth or in local leagues. Usually he must serve two seasons before obtaining promotion. The decision to promote him to Class 2 is taken by the Referees Committee of the Association and is based on his practical performance on the field of play. He may be promoted to Class 1, after two or so years satisfactory service in Class 2, on assessment by the Association's assessors and by reports from the clubs in whose games he has officiated. Clubs are asked to grade a referee according to their judgment of his performance.

307. In the early stages of his career a committee of the County Association chooses the matches at which he will officiate, usually by way of a monthly rota of appointments. But as he becomes more experienced and better qualified he may find himself placed on the list of a particular league in his county. Though he can still be called upon by the County much of his work will now be in that league, and he will be appointed to referee matches chosen by the league. His next step upward is to be nominated by his County F.A. for inclusion on the

list of a "feeder" league. This is a senior professional or amateur league or competition recognised by the Football League for the purpose of recruitment. Next he may be promoted to the list of one of the 11 "contributory" leagues and so on to the Football League's list. At this top level a referee in a lower league also acts as linesman in a higher league. "Lining" is part of a referee's training, for among other things it gives him practice in positioning himself in relation to the flow of the play. All the linesmen on the Football League list, for example, are also on the referees' list of a contributory league. In his first year on the League's list he will start by refereeing Fourth and Third Division Games before being tried in the topmost games. Only when he has proved his worth will he be chosen regularly to referee in the League, sometimes in top First Division needle matches with capacity gates, at other times in quite ordinary ill-attended Third or Fourth Division matches. The assessment of referees for promotion is based on the reports from each club in respect of each match, clubs being required to give marks on an 0-4 point scale: 0—unsatisfactory; 1—poor; 2—moderate; 3—good; and 4—excellent. A referee's marked performance over say, 10 league matches, a mark from each club, gives an average mark for the league. Finally the referee may achieve that rare distinction of being nominated by his national association for the F.I.F.A. list and thus becomes qualified to referee in international competitions.

308. There are some 7,000 referees in Class 3 registered with County Associations in England; some 5,000 in Class 2 and some 5,000 in Class 1. Of these 17,000 or more, only 80 odd reach the Football League's list of referees and another 300 or so become linesmen in that League. Those who do have served an apprenticeship at all levels of football, including a period in leagues only a little below in status and standard of the League, and have gained some experience of officiating before crowds, but not of course of the size and intensity encountered in a top First Division match.

309. While a referee's success measured in terms of promotion depends largely on his ability, it is influenced by two factors: by where he lives and by the standard set by the County F.A. As referees are usually appointed to officiate at matches which do not involve them in lengthy journeys from their homes, those who live in an area with few matches in competitions recognised by the Football League stand little chance of getting on the League's list, the ambition of most referees. At a lower level there are more chances of officiating in senior leagues in some parts of the county than in others. There is thus a measure of inequality of opportunity.

310. There is a good deal of dissatisfaction among referees because of the widely differing proportions of referees graded in the three classes by the various County Associations. It is the natural ambition of most referees to hold a Class 1 certificate, for without it no one can progress to the highest levels of football. Indeed, referees who remain a long time in Classes 2 or 3 may get impatient and leave the game. The very informative Stonick Report on Uniformity in the Administration, Classification and Promotion of Referees (1964)(1), showed that the percentage of referees in Class 1 varied among counties from 11 per cent to 53 per cent. It is difficult to believe that some counties attract five times

(1) Prepared for the Midland Division of the Referees Association by W. D. Stones and E. Hicks. We are glad to know that the Report has received some attention from the governing bodies of the game.

as many able referees as other counties. The reason lies largely in differing standards. Some counties set much too high a standard, others much too low. The ideal would be for standards everywhere to be the same but this is impossible of attainment as it would be a sheer impossibility for all referees to be seen by the same assessors. The Stonick Report suggested that a percentage range of 25 per cent to 35 per cent would be reasonable.

311. There are two general problems—the supply and the quality of referees. Most counties would welcome more referees on their lists. Some are hard pressed to find referees to officiate at all matches. In the minor leagues and competitions it is usual for each team to provide one linesman. But in the senior leagues linesmen are appointed from the referees' list and indeed are fully qualified referees. Thus, at the senior level, amateur and professional, three names have to be taken from the list of referees for every match. As the number of clubs increases so does the need for referees.

312. For the great mass of referees, taking charge of a game is much more a form of voluntary effort than a gainful occupation. A fee of 7s. 6d. or 10s. 0d. a match, slightly less for linesmen, to be collected before the game starts or not later than half-time, is hardly a princely reward nowadays. Even for a First Division game referees and linesmen get only £10 10s. 0d. and £5 5s. 0d. respectively. For officiating in the F.A. Cup Final they receive £15 15s. 0d. and £7 17s. 6d., plus a souvenir gold medal in each case. It is natural to ask, therefore, whether the supply, and therefore indirectly the quality, could not be improved by raising the level of fees.

313. The Referees' Association and most of those we consulted on this point felt that increased fees would not produce the result required, or if it did might introduce the undesirable element of some serving for what they could get out of the game. We are full of admiration for the general mass of referees. They give the game a great deal without much hope of reward or fame. At the top levels of the game they combine the austere habits of the judiciary (they are not found drinking with players or directors) with the gentility of a poor relation (they arrive and depart from a League ground without fuss or notice). At the lower levels they share the pleasures and discomforts of the players, even to lack of changing facilities. They do it because they are interested in football and because they are unable to or prefer not to play. At the end of the season they may have earned £10 or £20, or £100 or so. A few may earn £400 or so in a year.

314. Even so, we are not willing to accept the argument that money has no attractions. Looking ahead, we think that fees for referees and linesmen will have to rise. At the lowest levels there is perhaps little that can be done, for most clubs at that level operate on very slender budgets. What, however, should be the policy of say, the Football League.?

315. We have all seen games spoiled by a referee's indecisiveness, arbitrariness and lack of control. Yet the general opinion of those who have watched and participated in the game is that the quality of refereeing has not deteriorated but has remained at a very high level. Britain produces some of the best referees in the world. Nevertheless there are complaints and suggestions for improvement. Some have proposed that a small number of top referees should get £50 to £100 a week, perhaps, officiating at two or three League games, in more or

less a full-time capacity. In other words, the increased skill, pay and professionalisation of the player should be matched by the creation of the professional referee.

316. We very much doubt whether anything would be gained by the League's trying to employ only full-time referees. At the moment, because it is essentially a part-time weekend occupation, it attracts devotees from every profession and walk of life—schoolmasters, lawyers, doctors, civil servants, clerks, and artisans. There is even a Minister of the Crown on the League's list. Few of these would be willing to give up their careers to be a full-time League referee, for a profession which at that level ceases at the age of 47 or 50. The Referees' Association are firmly against a system of professional referees.

317. We make three recommendations:

- (i) The Football League should appoint a Director of Referees, responsible for the selection and training of referees and linesmen on the League's list, and for their appointment to officiate at League matches. Both aspects of his duties would be very important. The League has nearly 400 referees and linesmen on its list and spends some £80,000 a year on their fees and expenses. In deciding who should be placed on and remain on that list the Director, who would be equivalent to a director of personnel in industry, would be assisted by three or four former top class referees, part-time, who would supplement the club marking system by watching and reporting on recommended and promising referees and act as assessors-cum-talent scouts. Of the 46 League matches played most Saturdays during the season, some are more demanding than others. It would be the Director's responsibility to fit the abilities of officials on the list to the needs of particular matches, not for selection to be by rota or by chance, as it largely is under the present system.
- (ii) The League should establish a small cadre of referees and linesmen, within their present list, who had proved outstanding in handling difficult and major matches. These should receive either a retainer of say, £1,000 a year, or a higher fee per match, but would not need to be full-time. The ladder of promotion would still remain open right to the top, indeed the development proposed would be a natural extension of it.
- (iii) There should be a general increase in fees. The present 10 guinea fee for refereeing a match is not derisory compared with the earnings of players in the Third and Fourth Divisions. It is, however, now completely out of line with earnings in the two top divisions and takes inadequate account of the strains and stresses of modern top-level football. It has lagged behind rising earnings and prices, indeed it was three guineas in 1939 and was actually seven guineas at the time of the abolition of the maximum wage in 1961. Associated with this increase we should like to see the status of referees and linesmen raised, e.g. by improving the quality of their accommodation and by the respect shown to them on the field.

318. We recommend developments on similar lines in Scotland, though we appreciate that the scale of the Scottish problem is not as large and that the Scottish F.A. already employ Referee Supervisors.

319. It has been suggested that referees be recruited from the ranks of retired professional footballers. This is commendable provided the players serve the same apprenticeship, otherwise other referees would consider them to be favoured. If they did so, they would have little chance of reaching the top as referees unless they could be serving their apprenticeship while playing, e.g. in mid-week competitions in which their clubs were not engaged. This would give them the advantage of reaching a high classification by the time they retired from playing. Secondary schools could play a more important role. Boys with no aptitude for playing football but possessing a love of the game could, if they had the necessary temperament, be encouraged to referee school games. Many who have been so encouraged have gone on to become first-class referees.

DISCIPLINE

PLAYERS

320. At first sight it may appear odd that Britain's most popular sport is also the one which produces most cases of misconduct. In part this is a matter of sheer size. In the 1966-67 season 222 Football League players were suspended, censured or fined. The clubs concerned employed some 2,500 professionals who played an average of, say, 40 games during the season. Misconduct took place in two out of every 1,000 player-games, or 0.2 per cent. More important is the character of the different games. Many popular sports, e.g. swimming, tennis, do not involve physical contact. Of the team games only rugby (including rugby league) really compares with football in scope and character—though games such as hockey (on land or on ice) and lacrosse may also involve fierce physical contact. Nevertheless when all this is said there still remains concern at the large number of cases of indiscipline at all levels of football, and particularly at the increase in recent years.

321. We deal first with the arrangements for handling players accused of misconduct on the field, and then consider some of the wider implications of this problem.

322. Cases of misconduct on the field of play arise from the action and report of the referee in charge of the game. The Laws of the Game which, of course, apply throughout the world, give the referee wide and important responsibilities. He is there to enforce the Laws and decide any point of dispute. He may stop the game for any infringement of the Laws and even terminate it if he deems it necessary, e.g. by reason of interference by the spectators. He may caution (i.e. "book") any player "guilty of misconduct or ungentlemanly behaviour", and if the player persists he may "suspend him from further participation in the game", i.e. send him off. Even without previous caution he may send off a player guilty of violent conduct. If he books or sends off a player he must send the name of the offender to the national or affiliated association concerned within two days after the occurrence, Sundays not included.

323. In the case of English clubs the referee sends his report to the F.A. in respect of the players of all clubs in full membership of the Association, or playing in one of the F.A. competitions, e.g. the Amateur Cup, and to the appropriate County F.A. in all other instances. Somewhat similar arrangements apply in Scotland and Wales, the Scottish and Welsh F.A.'s. handling the top level cases, and the other associations handling the rest.

324. During the 1966-67 season the Football Association had 1,695 cases of caution reported to it. 956 of these were in respect of players on the books of

the 88 Football League clubs, 647 in respect of the 165 other full member clubs, and 92 from other clubs. The reasons given in the referees' reports for administering cautions were as in Table 13:

TABLE 13
CAUTIONS REPORTED TO THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION 1966-67

	<i>Football League Clubs</i>				<i>Other full member Clubs</i>	<i>Other Clubs</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Div. 1</i>	<i>Div. 2</i>	<i>Div. 3</i>	<i>Div. 4</i>			
Ungentlemanly Conduct	56	35	39	33	137	20	320
Deliberate Fouls	61	51	56	59	115	17	359
Deliberate Tripping	23	23	20	16	32	7	121
Dangerous Play	41	42	34	25	74	11	227
Persistent Infringement of Laws	46	21	26	24	87	16	220
Aggressive Attitude	26	19	13	28	63	4	153
Dissent	41	41	25	32	139	17	295
Total 1966/67	294	232	213	217	647	92	1,695
(Total 1965/66)	(317)	(211)	(228)	(245)	(435)	(84)	(1,520)

Source: Football Association. The four Welsh clubs in the Football League are excluded.

325. A player may, of course, be cautioned several times in the same season. The Table therefore exaggerates the number of players involved. The first time a player is cautioned the fact is noted in the record kept by the F.A. and the second time he is warned that on a third offence (formerly a fourth) his name will go before the Disciplinary Committee. This is composed of 16 members of the F.A. Council but usually cases are considered by the Chairman and two other members acting on a rota system. In addition, that Committee considers reports on players sent off. In 1966-67 the Disciplinary Committee either censured, fined or suspended 462 offenders: 222 from League clubs, 199 from other clubs in full membership, and 41 others. These are analysed in Table 14:

TABLE 14
CASES DEALT WITH BY THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE
OF THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION 1966-67

	<i>Football League Clubs</i>				<i>Other full member Clubs</i>	<i>Other Clubs</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Div. 1</i>	<i>Div. 2</i>	<i>Div. 3</i>	<i>Div. 4</i>			
Kicking	10	12	9	12	27	8	78
Striking	17	13	7	11	59	21	128
Foul/Abusive Language	9	4	7	7	37	3	67
Other	8	7	4	—	26	4	49
3rd Cautions	14	16	10	10	24	—	74
Crowd Misbehaviour	2	4	6	1	5	4	22
Other	7	6	5	4	21	1	44
Total 1966/67	67	62	48	45	199	41	462
(Total 1965/66)	(62)	(31)	(39)	(40)	(293)	(23)	(488)

Source: Football Association. The four Welsh Clubs in the Football League are excluded.

326. The clubs in full membership of the F.A. contain the cream of English football—all the top professional and most of the top amateur players. To those who watch either at the ground or on television these are the clubs which present the national image of the game. It is worthwhile therefore to see what conclusions can be drawn from these figures.

327. First, during 1966-67 every League club had one or more players cautioned, 28 cautions being reached in one club and 26 in two others. All except 11 had one or more players censured, suspended or fined, two clubs having eight such cases. (In passing it must be borne in mind that the figures cover all the players on the books of the club—First, Reserve, A, etc., teams.) The 165 other clubs in full membership cover most of the other professional clubs and the main amateur clubs. Of these only 22 had no misconduct of any description recorded against their players in 1966-67. In other words, misconduct was not confined to the players of a few clubs but was general. An analysis of the records of the County F.A.'s. would no doubt show this to apply to the country as a whole.

328. Second, though the general opinion of those with experience of the game over a long period is that the game is less dirty than it was 20 or 30 years ago, the number of disciplinary cases has risen in recent years. The number of cautions reported to and censures, fines and suspensions imposed by the Football Association on clubs in full membership rose from around 1,000 in the seasons 1962-63/1963-64, to 1,466 in the season 1964-65, to 1,901, in 1965-66, and to 2,024 in 1966-67. The Welsh F.A. dealt with 181 cases of misconduct in 1966-67 as against 137 cases in 1965-66 and 119 in the previous season. The number of cautions rose from 246 in 1964-65 to 346 in 1966-67. Most County Associations also report a heavy increase. Indeed, service on the committees dealing with indiscipline is increasingly arduous. This increase has gone along with great improvements in the skill and speed with which the game is played. In part it is due to changing attitudes; many cases now reported, e.g. for charging the goalkeeper, would not have been treated as misconduct 20 years ago. Bad language is a common reason why players are reported at the lower levels of the game and no doubt reflects changing social attitudes towards swearing among the young.

329. Third, some clubs had much worse records than others. In the First Division, for example, one club had 26 cautions and 6 suspensions, etc., whilst two others had only 6 and 2 respectively. In the Fourth Division one club had 26 and 6 cases, and another had only 3 and 1. The big offenders among the 165 non-league clubs were mainly clubs playing in professional leagues. But among the 20 Isthmian League amateur clubs there were 77 cautions and 21 censures, suspensions or fines; one club had no cases and at the other extreme two had 11 cases. As a broad generalisation it may be said that though misconduct is found at all levels of the game it is more pronounced at the top level, particularly among the professional clubs and the top amateur clubs, and that among these there are wide differences in the records of clubs.

330. Two explanations may be offered. It is probably true that the standard of refereeing is better, firmer and much more strict in these top leagues and

competitions. The referees are very experienced and do not hesitate to take action against a player they consider to be infringing the Laws of the Game. But this can be only a very small part of the total explanation.

331. The other explanation is that misconduct is more likely to take place in highly competitive matches when the reputations of individual players and clubs are at stake. That this need not be the case can be judged from the record of the F.A. Cup finals in which it is extremely rare for referees even to have to caution a player. But when vital points are at stake and when so much depends on winning, players, urged on by the spectators, pull out that extra effort which goes beyond the physically permissible. A player in these circumstances may lose his temper and if he is known to be easily riled the opposition may needle him into retaliation. 22 young men at the peak of physical condition, playing a game which involves a good deal of hefty physical contact, are combustible material.

332. Whatever the explanation, the situation is to be deplored. Dirty play reduces the stature of the game for players and spectators alike. If it occurs in a match which appears on television it presents the game in a very bad light to some millions of people. It is particularly bad for boys and the younger players to see highly paid and skilful professionals, some of international status, losing their temper, arguing with the referee and adopting dirty or petty tactics. Who can blame them if they learn to follow suit? Who cannot but have some sympathy with headmasters who, seeing this behaviour, discourage their boys from playing soccer? We have no simple or convenient remedy to offer.

333. There appears to have been an increase in the questioning of the referees' decisions by players. It is noticeable that 295 (or 17 per cent) of the cautions reported to the F.A. in 1966-67 were given for dissent, i.e. of players disagreeing with the referee, and was the third most common reason. No doubt some of the cautions issued for ungentlemanly conduct involved players abusing the referee. Also, cautions are given only in bad cases and common observation shows many instances in which the referee ignores the conduct of players who question his decision. We found the querying of the referee's decision to be a particularly distasteful aspect of football not found in rugby or other sports. We would like to see it stopped. To this end **we recommend** that the only players on the field who should be entitled to approach the referee should be the two captains. They should do so only to ask for clarification of his decision, or to ask for a second opinion from the linesman, but then only rarely and in clear cases. It should be treated as a serious breach of conduct for any other player to approach the referee during a game.

334. We have already pointed out that the record of clubs varies quite widely—in both the professional and the amateur game. Some of this may be accidental, due to the temporary presence of one or two able but quick-tempered players. But some of it can undoubtedly be laid at the door of the clubs. Either they adopt a negative attitude and are unwilling to discipline or get rid of dirty players, or else they positively encourage what they regard as tough or virile play. Professional players generally play to the instructions of the club manager as regards tactics—and it must be assumed that the manager does not knowingly for long go against the wishes of his directors. It is impossible, therefore, to avoid the conclusion that clubs with bad records over a period of years are clubs which encourage or condone misconduct in their players.

335. Rule 36(a) of the Football Association lays down that "Every . . . Club is responsible to the Council for the action of its players, officials and spectators . . ." A club which allows its spectators to get out of hand may be heavily fined, as was Millwall in 1967, or have its ground closed for a period. We understand that at the end of each season the Disciplinary Committee writes informally to clubs in membership of the Association whose players have had cautions or suspensions totalling 12 or more, expressing its perturbation and asking the club to ensure that its players behave better in future. This is not sufficient. In Essex the County Association treats every reported case of misconduct as a charge against the club as well as the player, so enabling the Association to fine or caution the club. **We recommend that:**

- (i) The practice of the Essex County Association should be generally adopted.
- (ii) The disciplinary authority should publicly caution, censure or fine a club or its directors and officials where it is shown that the player's misconduct arises from their policy or instructions, or their failure to take adequate steps to prevent such behaviour.

336. Obviously a great deal depends on the referee. Sometimes he will adopt a lenient attitude in the early part of the match which may lead to bad feeling among the players and a sense that as they cannot rely on the referee to protect them they had better take matters into their own hands. Or he may fuss about minor infringements and by this, and by giving not obviously clear decisions, exasperate the players and the crowd. Referees with these failings should not be appointed to handle games likely to prove difficult—indeed they should be quickly dropped from the list of League and top class referees.

DISCIPLINARY MACHINERY

337. The Professional Footballers' Association made two criticisms of the present arrangements. First, that League players are on trial before a court of their employers. Second, that all parties should be entitled to have legal representation if they so wished. They said they would prefer to have a disciplinary tribunal composed entirely of people interested in the game, but not directly connected with any club.

338. Though we understand their concern, we see difficulties in their proposals. At present, the machinery for considering referees' reports of misconduct is substantially the same whether concerned with an average player in a small village league or a professional with a national reputation. Moreover, the vast majority of cases are dealt with, whether at County F.A. or headquarters level, purely on the referee's report, which gives a full statement of the facts, the accuracy of which is seldom contested by the player charged. The Disciplinary Committee of the F.A., which is not composed of the player's employers but of representatives of the Association, deals not only with the first team but with all Football League players and with the players of over 160 other clubs. All but 52 of the 462 cases considered in 1966-67 were dealt with on the referee's report. Without very strong reasons we are against erecting an elaborate system for dealing with discipline in the game generally, or for handling charges against professional players in a special way.

339. Nevertheless the present arrangements are open to criticism. When a player's reputation and livelihood are at stake the procedure should be such

that he feels he has been given a fair hearing and that there is reasonable consistency in the penalties imposed. Some charges are, however, graver than others and this is recognised by the right of all players, amateur or professional, at all levels of the game, to demand a personal hearing. The F.A. Disciplinary Committee has a formal procedure for dealing with such cases, which is adopted by most County F.A.'s. **We recommend** for "personal hearing" cases that the commission appointed from members of the Disciplinary Committee should have an independent chairman, who should be legally qualified. He should be appointed by the Council of the Football Association in consultation with the Referees' Association and the Professional Footballers' Association, at least until such time as these two bodies are represented on the Council. This special disciplinary commission with its independent chairman should also deal with any appeals from the disciplinary committees of County F.A.'s.

340. We considered very seriously whether the disciplinary tribunal for personal hearing cases should be specially established and composed of three independent members not in any way associated with the F.A. We rejected this mainly because we favour a close link between the treatment of these cases and the action being taken generally by the Disciplinary Committee. **We recommend** however, that a right of appeal should be given in two classes of cases; (a) when the penalty is exceptionally severe, e.g. suspension for more than half a season or a fine of over £500, or (b) where the independent chairman gives leave to appeal. This appeal tribunal of three members should be appointed by the Football Association after consultation with the Professional Footballers and Referees' Associations. Otherwise it is in the interests of the game that the disciplinary machinery should be speedy and simple.

341. At the moment a player with a Football League club contract may be accompanied by a representative of the Professional Footballers' Association, provided that such representative is not a member of the legal profession. We think that this should suffice for most cases. **We recommend** that all players appearing before the "personal hearing" tribunal should, however, have the right to ask for legal representation and this should be allowed at the discretion of the independent chairman. A similar right, at the discretion of the chairman, should apply in appeal cases.

342. Discipline is not confined to players on the field. Under the rules of the Football Association action may be taken against club or association officials, referees, linesmen and spectators and also against players for misconduct off the field of play. Accusations of violation of the rules are dealt with by the appropriate disciplinary committee. Should the allegation involve the rules of both the Association and the Football League it is dealt with by a commission composed of representatives of both bodies. The right of personal hearing applies to all these cases and therefore so does our **recommendation** for an independent chairman, whether the case is considered by the Disciplinary Committee or by an *ad hoc* commission.

343. **We recommend** that similar disciplinary arrangements should apply to Scotland and Wales.

344. In recent years there has been an increase in disorderly behaviour by spectators. During the period 1946-60 there were 195 cases brought to the attention of the F.A., an average of 13 per season. In the following six seasons 148 cases were reported, an average of 25 per season. The matter was discussed some time ago at a meeting between representatives of a number of police forces (including the British Transport Police), the Football Association and the Football League. Both these governing bodies have been very concerned at this development.

345. We have not been able to devote the time and resources to the study of this problem which its complexity deserves. We very much welcome the initiative of the Birmingham Research Group, of which Dr. J. A. Harrington is Research Director and have been fortunate enough to see the Group's preliminary report. We are sure that its findings will be of value to all concerned. Whilst by no means agreeing with all the suggestions in the Report, or even with the use of the term hooliganism to describe all the kinds of behaviour it deals with, there are three findings which link up with our own views about the game in general. They are: (i) the need for firm and clear refereeing; (ii) the need for better facilities at many grounds—in this case from the viewpoint of crowd safety and behaviour; and (iii) the need for club management to take wider responsibility than just for team success. On this last point we have noted one or two clubs which over a period have educated their supporters to avoid the worst features of partisanship and mass behaviour.

CHAPTER VI

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GAME

346. Football is a sport needing a considerable degree of organisation for its success. In England, Scotland and Wales there are some 34,000 clubs, some with two or more teams. All of these play in leagues. There is also a large number of Cup, Shield or other knock-out competitions. Every weekend during the season some 25,000 games are played. Fixture lists have to be prepared and cup draws made, and for each match a referee has to be provided. Disputes between clubs, disciplinary cases, and a host of matters have to be handled by some recognised body. Thus, in addition to the organisation needed to keep individual clubs in activity, football requires a network of committees and managing bodies. Almost the whole of this organisation and administration is undertaken by voluntary effort. Had it ever to be run as a paid service it would cost hundreds of thousands in salaries. As it is, it costs very little, except in time and devotion.

347. The structure of the game is substantially the same in each of the three countries. There are the clubs which, subject to the rules of the governing bodies of the game, are completely autonomous. There are the management committees of the various leagues, the county or regional associations and at the top in each country, the Football Association, the Scottish Football Association and the Welsh Football Association respectively. We propose to deal first with England.

ENGLAND

348. All clubs, whether professional or amateur, are subject to the rules of the Football Association and for certain other matters are subject to the jurisdiction of either the County Association or the national body, or possibly of both. The arrangement is that clubs which play in a league or competition, all the members of which are members of one County Association, are under the control of that Association. Should, however, the clubs be members of a league which covers two or three counties they are under the control of a joint committee of the two or three County Associations. If the league or competition consists of clubs within the area of more than three County Associations, it comes directly under the Football Association. In addition the league or competition itself will have a management body unless it is administered directly by the County Association or, more rarely, by the Football Association.

349. Where, as is usual, the league or competition has a management committee separate from the F.A. or County Association, there has to be a division of function between the two governing bodies. In broad terms the management committees of the various leagues concern themselves with the affairs of their league—arrangement of fixtures, admission of new clubs, disputes between clubs, breach of the league's rules by clubs. The F.A., whether at county or national level, sanctions the league and approves its rules, provides a list of qualified referees, deals with all players against whom charges of indiscipline have been brought, and with clubs alleged to have broken the F.A. rules.

COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

350. Though the Football Association and the Football League catch the headlines and glamour, it is the County Associations and the various league management committees which are responsible for the organisation and well-being of the mass of English football.

351. The County Associations perform 11 main functions in respect of the clubs, leagues and competitions under their jurisdiction, i.e. other than the 255 clubs in full membership of the Football Association and the leagues under the jurisdiction of that Association and the five cup competitions run directly by it. They:

- (i) Recruit, train, and classify all referees.
- (ii) Appoint the referees and arrange for linesmen to officiate in many of the games played in the county.
- (iii) Consider all referees' reports of misconduct by players, decide and impose the penalty and deal with appeals against such decisions.
- (iv) Approve the rules of the leagues and competitions within their area.
- (v) Keep a watch on the annual accounts and finances of clubs.
- (vi) Within the framework of the rules of the F.A. applying to all English clubs, legislate for the clubs and competitions in their area, e.g. the number of Permit players allowed and the use of substitutes.
- (vii) Ensure that the F.A.'s. general rules are applied in their areas. In many instances they are the administrative bodies for the purposes of applying these rules.
- (viii) Select representative teams, e.g. the county teams which compete in the Northern and Southern Counties Amateur Championships. Players so chosen are expected to play unless excused by the associations.
- (ix) Operate a Benevolent Fund to assist players of affiliated clubs who may be injured whilst playing football.
- (x) Organise a number of competitions. It is not usual for a County F.A. to manage its own leagues, though Sheffield and Hallamshire do so, but most cup, shield or other knock-out competitions are managed and arranged by the counties.
- (xi) Distribute Cup Final tickets among their affiliated clubs. Of the 97,000 tickets, 32,000 are made available to the two finalists, about 19,000 to League clubs, and some 36,000 to the County Associations. As there are nearly 31,000 affiliated clubs, this means barely more than one ticket per club⁽¹⁾.

352. There are 43 County Associations. Their size, measured in terms of number of clubs in 1948, 1961, 1964 and 1967, is given in Table 15.

(1) The Football Association has a thankless task in trying to please the 120,000-150,000 people who would like to attend the Cup Final in a stadium built for under 100,000. The long term solution is the building of a much larger stadium.

TABLE 15

SIZE OF COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS IN ENGLAND

<i>County Association</i>	<i>Clubs in Membership</i>			
	1967	1964	1961	1948
Bedfordshire	323	244	188	186
Berks. and Bucks.	739	570	466	430
Birmingham	2,375	2,191	1,986	1,174
Cambridgeshire	210	157	168	115
Cheshire	1,032	875	734	512
Cornwall	318	293	261	220
Cumberland	183	145	164	136
Derbyshire	533	477	419	376
Devon	465	370	382	367
Dorset	189	181	174	178
Durham	990	730	720	631
East Riding	344	215	222	224
Essex	1,379	1,122	861	703
Gloucestershire	711	595	574	563
Hampshire	1,020	792	693	497
Herefordshire	131	119	103	82
Hertfordshire	624	513	440	257
Huntingdonshire	80	89	64	58
Kent	1,153	1,005	748	660
Lancashire	1,495	1,215	1,224	873
Leicestershire and Rutland	484	393	359	323
Lincolnshire	664	788	730	555
Liverpool	1,030	764	730	683
London	2,982	2,469	2,195	1,580
Manchester	1,118	1,059	854	582
Middlesex	755	584	576	577
Norfolk	650	503	423	370
Northamptonshire	453	315	264	169
North Riding	446	369	292	250
Northumberland	459	326	309	303
Nottinghamshire	771	497	471	366
Oxfordshire	265	197	181	188
Sheffield and Hallamshire	1,031	820	819	650
Shropshire	198	166	172	130
Somerset	441	381	388	280
Staffordshire	849	635	583	375
Suffolk	381	286	256	268
Surrey	985	734	708	560
Sussex	779	617	541	413
West Riding	1,193	879	779	680
Wiltshire	341	302	238	190
Worcestershire	252	205	189	213
Westmorland	41	30	32	26
	30,862	25,217	22,680	17,973

Source: Football Association.

353. As was to be expected, they vary considerably in size. In 1967 two Associations (Birmingham and London) each had jurisdiction over more than 2,000 clubs; nine covered between 1,000-2,000 clubs and, at the other extreme, five each covered less than 200 clubs. The areas of each Association are determined by the F.A. There is no prescribed form of constitution. All clubs, whether professional or amateur, must be affiliated to the County Association covering their area. Each Association is managed by a Council elected by the affiliated clubs and district associations. In some areas each Football League club is

entitled to appoint a representative. There is the usual structure of committees dealing with such matters as finance, discipline, referees, leagues and competitions.

354. The great bulk of the work is done by voluntary labour. In the very large Associations the Secretary may be a full-time paid official, but in a recent enquiry by the F.A. 75 per cent of the counties which replied said that their secretaries were paid honoraria (including reimbursement of expenses) of between £200-£250 per annum. The finances of the small Associations are quite meagre. For example, the Oxfordshire Football Association with 265 clubs had an annual income of about £1,200 in 1967, of which only £131 went to the Secretary and Treasurer to cover their office expenses. Yet that Association runs six cup competitions and a youth league and a youth cup, deals with all allegations of misconduct in these competitions and in the thirty or more leagues and cup competitions sanctioned by it, controls all referees registered with it, holds examinations and grades all such referees and appoints the referee for each of some hundred games each Saturday, including a replacement should the referee fall ill, etc. Its income in 1967 came mainly from subscriptions (£288); share of net gate receipts from the competitions it organised (£338); referees' affiliation fees (£127); and fines (£253). In addition the Oxfordshire Association have a Benevolent Fund out of which grants of £453 were paid in 1967 to help injured players.

355. In contrast, Sheffield and Hallamshire, with over 1,000 affiliated clubs, had an income of £10,052 in 1966-67. Having five Football League clubs (including two First Division clubs) in its area as against one Third Division club in Oxfordshire, it obtained substantial income (£6,500) from certain matches involving these clubs. If this income is excluded, the remainder is on a scale similar to Oxfordshire, thus demonstrating once again the dependence of the game's administration on League clubs. The Sheffield and Hallamshire Association employ a full-time secretary, a male assistant and a part-time shorthand typist. They manage eight leagues (covering 186 teams) and five cup competitions directly and have general jurisdiction over another 41, they have over 500 referees on their list. They appoint referees in all the competitions they manage directly and deal with disciplinary matters in respect of the 400 or so games played every week. They make grants of about £100 a year from the Benevolent Fund.

356. The Football Association told the Committee that when this system of County Associations first began, it was probably adequate to fulfil its necessary functions, but that "With the growth in football, however, and changes in social patterns, essential administration has multiplied at a faster rate than voluntary help, and a predominant impression from counties is that the current system is becoming dangerously overloaded". The Association was particularly concerned about the finances of the rural county associations. These bodies often do not know where the necessary funds are coming from to carry out even their minimum functions. As the F.A. said: "This is obviously a poor basis for efficient organisation, and severely curtails the services the associations can give."

357. We are very concerned about the financial future and effectiveness of the County Associations. The big increase in the number of affiliated clubs, 8,000 between 1961 and 1967, has worsened not improved the position. The added

income they bring by way of annual affiliation fees is small because these fees are small, averaging around £1 per club. More referees have to be recruited, trained and graded, more disciplinary cases dealt with, more leagues and clubs supervised, and so on. The big increase in clubs playing football only on Sundays is an added administrative complication. A County Association which formerly had say 250 clubs and now has say 350-400 is still unable to have a full or even a substantially part-time staff (unless there are special local circumstances) yet its administration has gone well beyond what can reasonably be undertaken by voluntary effort.

358. In answer to our further enquiry the Football Association suggested that £75,000 a year would be needed to provide salaried secretaries for County Associations, with a further £30,000 for clerical assistance and £20,000 for office expenses—altogether an extra £125,000 per annum. We formed the impression that these were guesses rather than carefully worked out figures. We are quite clear, however, that more money will have to be made available if the local organisation is to continue to provide an effective framework for the game. The need is even stronger if the associations are to play a more positive role in such developments as coaching and ground improvements.

359. We doubt whether many of the associations themselves will be able to raise the money required, and a few years ago even the F.A. would have been unable to provide much, if any, assistance. But the financial position of the Association has greatly improved and it can now afford to devote a substantial sum towards helping and improving the local administration of the game. In doing this we think the opportunity should be taken for a fresh look at the present structure. One possibility which has been suggested is to amalgamate a number of the counties into much larger administrative units, the criterion being a unit covering the number of clubs and competitions sufficient to justify the employment of a full-time secretary. In the rural areas this might lead to the association having to cover such a large territory as to be out of touch with the problems and needs of the various clubs and leagues. We are inclined to think, therefore, that there is a case for continuing most if not all the County Associations and even giving them some financial assistance. **We recommend** that the County Association structure should be strengthened for certain purposes by a network of regional officers appointed and financed by the F.A. These officers would be responsible for organising coaching schemes, and would help the County Associations, e.g. in the training, examining and grading of referees, and in the development of the game and the facilities available in their areas.

THE LEAGUES

360. Football at all levels is organised in competitive leagues. Each league is run by an executive or management committee and officers elected by the clubs at an annual general meeting. This committee is responsible for deciding such matters as which clubs shall be members of the league, the arrangement of fixtures, the settlement of disputes between clubs and, in more senior leagues, the appointment of referees and linesmen and the scale of fees they must be paid, and the division of gate receipts. The great majority of these leagues are run by voluntary effort, are known only in their locality and receive the attention only of the local newspaper. A few, however, operate on a regional or national scale and are widely known, and of these the doyen is the Football League.

361. The Football League consists of 44 clubs in full membership which constitute the First and Second Divisions and 48 in associate membership which constitute the Third and Fourth Divisions. The governing body is the Management Committee consisting of the President, two Vice-Presidents and six representatives of the clubs all elected by the Annual General Meeting for three years, one-third retiring or coming up for re-election every year. At the General Meetings only the First and Second Division clubs have votes. The other 48 clubs are entitled to appoint four representatives known as the Associate Members Liaison Committee, who cast their four votes as instructed by a meeting of Associate Members. There are thus 48 votes plus the President's vote, and any change of rules requires the support of at least three-quarters of the votes of those present and entitled to vote.

362. The rules of the Football League are naturally more elaborate than the rules of say the Oxfordshire Senior League, but in essence they serve the same purpose—they provide for the government of the league, the arrangement of fixtures, the relations between the various clubs, the appointment and payment of referees, the status of players, etc. Being a competition which draws clubs from more than three counties, the Football League, along with such leagues as the Southern and Central Leagues for professionals, and the Isthmian and Northern Leagues for amateurs, is under the jurisdiction of the Football Association.

363. We have been greatly impressed by all the devoted work put into the game by those who run the individual clubs, by the management or executive committees of the various leagues and by the County Associations. It is very largely due to their efforts that football can be played in an organised way at all levels throughout the country and is generally in such a healthy state.

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

364. At the top of all this organised effort, and making its own special contribution, is the Football Association. Founded in 1863, it is the national governing body for football played by English clubs, whether amateur or professional. In essence its work differs from that of the County Associations already described in three respects:

- (i) As the national association for England it represents the country at the meetings of F.I.F.A. (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) and expresses English views and interests as to the Laws of the Game, the arrangements for the World Cup, etc.
- (ii) The Association is the supreme rule-making body for English football. Its rules are binding on all the County and affiliated associations and on all leagues and clubs.
- (iii) It is the court of appeal against decisions by the County and other affiliated associations, e.g. by a player disciplined by such an association.

365. For the rest its work differs from that of the County Associations only because it deals mainly with matters of national concern. The teams it chooses represent England, not a county, and their success or failure in the increasingly keen struggle for international prestige places very heavy responsibilities on the Association. The competitions it runs directly—particularly the F.A. Challenge Cup, the Amateur Cup and the Youth Cup—and the leagues under its juris-

diction attract the best clubs in the country and receive considerable public attention. The players it disciplines include some of national and international fame. The Association can hardly avoid getting involved in any aspect of the game that attracts attention in the national press or on radio and television.

366. It is very important to consider the proper role of the Football Association. In terms of the day-to-day running of the game its contribution is quite rightly negligible. It is not an executive body in this sense. That work is well done by the County Associations and the committees which manage the various leagues. Running five cup competitions, and dealing with allegations of misconduct against players of the clubs in full membership, though important is not particularly more onerous than the similar functions performed by County Associations; at least they can hardly be regarded as *a raison d'être*. As we see it the Association has two roles, two contributions to make to the development and well-being of English football. First, it is the national parliament for the game. Second, it has a general responsibility for promoting and developing the game in every way. We deal with each in turn.

367. The representative function is well provided for in the Council of the Association. It is composed of 84 members elected as follows:

	<i>No. of Members</i>
(i) The President, Treasurer and not more than seven Vice-Presidents (one of whom is the Chairman)*	9
(ii) The Life Vice-Presidents and Life Members, i.e. every person who has completed 30 years' service (whether continuous or discontinuous) as an elected member of the Council and has reached the age of 75. (If a Vice-President becomes a Life Member he carries the title of Life Vice-President.) At the moment there are two Life Vice-Presidents	2
(iii) One representative from each of 10 divisions elected by the 255 clubs in full membership of the Association grouped into 10 areas for voting purposes	10
(iv) Eight representatives appointed by the Football League	8
(v) One representative elected by each County Association**	42
(vi) One representative elected by each of six bodies deemed to be County Associations: Amateur Alliance, Army, Cambridge University, Oxford University, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force	6
(vii) One representative each from the Universities' Athletic Union, the Public Schools' Association, and the English Schools' Association, and from the Football Associations of Australia, British West Indies, Canada and New Zealand	7
<i>Total</i> 1968 ..	84

* The two former Presidents (the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duke of Gloucester) are formally members of the Council but do not attend.

** Westmorland is too small to have direct representation and is represented by Cumberland.

368. All except the Past Presidents, Life Vice-Presidents and Life Members are elected annually. The President, Treasurer and the seven Vice-Presidents, one of whom is the Chairman, are elected by the Annual General Meeting and are known as the elected officers. The others are elected by the bodies they represent, except for members in category (vii) who are formally elected by the Council itself, though the names are put forward by the bodies concerned. Having regard to the representative role of the Council, **we recommend** that its membership should be widened to cover three interests not at present directly represented on it: the Referees, the Professional Footballers, and the Secretaries and Managers. These seem to us at least as significant as several of the bodies with members on the Council at the moment, and we feel that the acceptance of our recommendation would have wide support.

369. The majority of the officers in office in September 1967 were over the age of 70. We find it extraordinary that reaching the age of 75 should be regarded as a qualification for the main active offices in the Association. There must be other ways whereby the Association can honour life-long devotion of its Council members.⁽¹⁾ Appointment to the offices carrying the heaviest responsibilities should not be determined by length of service and seniority, but by intrinsic merit. The F.A. should encourage more younger men to participate in the administration of the game. Otherwise there is a danger of remoteness, of a game for young men being administered wholly by old men. **We also recommend** that there should be a compulsory retiring age of 70 for membership of the Council and its committees.

370. The Council meets five times each year, including a summer meeting in a holiday resort in the north or south in alternate years. The meetings, even the summer one, are sometimes quite short, not longer than 15–30 minutes on occasion. At the moment we doubt whether the Council plays a significant enough role to justify the cost of travel and subsistence involved in bringing members together from all parts of the country so frequently. We would prefer the Council to meet not more than twice a year.

371. Of the functions which the Association performs, several important ones are largely the responsibility of committees, for example the three major cups each have their own standing committee, discipline is dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee, international matches and teams by the International Committee. There are indeed 15 standing and 8 other committees. We do not doubt that most of this machinery works very well. Our concern is with the overall picture. Has the Football Association shown the clarity of purpose and been as forward looking as one has the right to expect in a national governing body for the greatest playing and spectator sport in the country?

372. We doubt whether many of those intimately concerned with the game would give a firm, positive answer to this large question. For our part we think that two factors have militated against the Association—the lack of an effective executive committee and over-attention to the affairs of the Football League.

373. A Council of 84 members, though excellent for broad discussion and for representing the interests of the game in every part of the country, cannot be an

(1) Any person who has been a member of the Council of the Scottish F.A. for seven years, either continuously or in separate periods, is presented with a gold badge which entitles him to admission to all matches under the jurisdiction of the Association.

effective policy-making body. Rightly of course, much of the detailed work is done in committee. But most of these committees deal with a single specialised subject. Only one—the Finance and General Purposes Committee—appears to have general functions, but even here the terms of reference confine it to the control of the Association's finances and dealing with such other matters as are not within the province of any other Standing Committee. It is not empowered to take an overall view of the work of the Association. General executive power seems to be in the hands of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Vice-Presidents and Life Vice-Presidents—at the moment 11 in all.

374. **We recommend** that the Council of the Association should examine its constitution and committee structure with a view to providing a more effective central policy and planning committee. This committee would, of course, be responsible to the Council, and its major policy recommendations would require the approval of the Council. But the initiative and the responsibility for taking a general view of the needs of the game and for looking ahead would rest primarily with this committee.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION AND THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

375. The Football League, formally speaking, is but one among a great number of leagues, no more and no less. Its relationship with the Football Association flows from this basic fact. It is under the jurisdiction of the F.A. because it covers clubs from more than three counties. It is thus the responsibility of the F.A. to approve the rules of the League and to deal with disciplinary cases arising in League games. There is no formal difference here between the League, its clubs and their players and certain other leagues spreading over more than three counties, e.g. the Northern and Southern Leagues, their clubs and their players.

376. The formal position tends in practice, however, to be overshadowed by the power relationship and by the mass public attention which League football attracts. The League and its clubs are the money-making side of the game. The great bulk of the F.A.'s annual income arises from the activities of League clubs and their players and so does most of that which keeps the County Associations in existence. But money is not made without risk and the League clubs are risky business enterprises, with substantial sums of money at stake. Their players are highly paid professionals. The clubs and many of their players are nationally-known names, some renowned throughout the world. They are great attractions and great entertainment value. They may play according to the same Laws of the Game and subject to the same F.A. Rules, but their way of life and their financial position mark them out from the mass of other leagues and clubs.

377. The difference comes out in many ways. For example, changes in the length of the playing season and in its opening and closing dates are likely to be looked at quite differently by Football League and amateur clubs. The former's thoughts are affected by the financial gains or losses from any such change, the claims of European competitions, the attractions of overseas tours. The amateur club may be concerned with the fact that its ground and many of its players are likely to be involved in cricket or some other summer sport. Another example is the choice of international teams. The vast mass of clubs and players are not affected by this very important F.A. activity. They are

concerned only to see the best team chosen. In contrast, a small number of League clubs may be affected adversely. Absence of one or more of their best players may lose them precious points in the League and so reduce their chance of qualifying for one of the lucrative European competitions. The player may be injured, as was Jackie Charlton in the 1967 England v. Scotland game, just at a crucial time in Leeds' League and Cup programme.

378. Apart from the purely financial aspect, and as we have seen many League clubs are anything but rich, there is the vast difference in the publicity given to League clubs and players and to the rest of the game. Professional football is one of the biggest entertainments in the country and as such attracts the national attention of the press, radio and television. Anything, particularly anything the slightest unusual, is news. As a result the F.A. is likely to find itself involved in incidents which arise in the Football League which it could ignore if they occurred in other leagues.

379. Thus apart from differences in attitude and interests there are differences in power and in public importance. It would be difficult in practice for the F.A. to treat the League in precisely the same way as it treats other leagues. In any head-on conflict between the two bodies the League and its clubs would have the resources, prestige and mass support to put up a very strong and probably winning fight.

380. The special relationship was recognised early in the century and has continued to develop. The main features of the present agreement between the two bodies are:

(1) *Machinery*

- (i) The President and the eight other members of the League Management Committee are members of the Council of the F.A. The President of the League is a Vice-President of the F.A., a member of the F.A. Consultative Committee and a member of the International Board.
- (ii) A Standing Joint Committee representing the F.A. and the League is appointed each season to discuss matters of policy and common interest.

(2) *Jurisdiction*

Whichever body receives information of alleged breach of rules and regulations by a League Club must at once inform the other body. Should the rules and regulations of only one body be affected, the case is to be dealt with by that body. Should that body be the F.A., an F.A. Commission may be appointed consisting of an equal number of members of the F.A. Council who are also members of the League Management Committee and of those who are not.

(3) *International and Representative Matches*

Professional players must be placed at the disposal of the F.A. at all times. An annual programme of representative matches is set out in the agreement, the dates of which must be agreed between the F.A. and the League. Inter-League matches with the leagues of other countries may be arranged by the League, but must not conflict with International Board agreements. Matches between League Clubs and the clubs of other national leagues must not be in competition with international matches arranged by either the F.A. or the League. The League receives 4 per cent of the net gate receipts of international and representative matches arranged by the F.A.

(4) *Television*

A sub-committee of the Joint Standing Committee has to be appointed each year to select matches for television and to negotiate the financial terms.

(5) *Sundry Matters*

- (i) All professional players must be registered with the F.A. and the League.
- (ii) All referees officiating in League matches must be registered with a County Association.
- (iii) Official documents shall be exchanged between the two bodies.

381. We have heard somewhat conflicting opinions about the relations between the Association and the League. Some witnesses did not think that the Association gave sufficient attention to the special needs and problems of the League club and the professional player, being too dominated by the amateur outlook. Others thought that the professional game dominated the Association's outlook and activities. Though the League only has nine directly elected representatives, including the President, many of the County representatives were said to be directly or indirectly associated with or dependent upon League clubs.

382. In their Report on Professional Football⁽¹⁾, P.E.P. suggested that the constitutional position was anomalous and tended to cause time-wasting friction. They thought the best solution would undoubtedly be a merger between the two bodies, with the League carrying its full weight at national level and, through the League clubs, at county level. This suggestion was made because P.E.P. thought that "external amateur control of the organisation (as distinct from the rules and discipline) of professional football is anomalous". The proposed merger would "form a joint body, in which the interests of professional football would be adequately represented". They thought that in any case the League was under-represented on the F.A. Council. Until these changes were made, they said the Association should exercise as little control as possible over the operation of professional football and concentrate on amateur football.

383. It is not clear to us what would be gained by such a merger. Administratively there is some duplication of effort at the moment. Professional players, for example, need to be registered with both bodies, and transfers are also handled by both. But this particular duplication could be eliminated by the Association leaving it to the League to receive, examine and approve the applications in return for a monthly statement of signings and transfers for the purpose of the Association's records. Either the Association must trust the League to handle registrations and transfers properly and not duplicate the work or else take steps to see that the League can be trusted. By and large, as we have seen, the functions of the two bodies are different. To make the Football Association responsible for the day-to-day affairs of the Football League would greatly add to its administrative preoccupations and, as P.E.P. infers, strengthen the position of the League in the Association's general affairs. If there is a criticism of the Association it is not that it has neglected the professional game, though undoubtedly on occasion it has been slow in accepting desirable developments, it is that it has done too little directly for the amateur game.

(1) *English Professional Football*, June 1966 (Political and Economic Planning).

384. Occasionally the Association seems to be confused about its proper role *vis-à-vis* the League. This can be illustrated by the Associated Schoolboy scheme which was developed by the League to meet problems peculiar to its clubs. The agreed scheme became part of the Regulations of the League, duly approved by its Annual General Meeting. The only formal action needed by the Association was the approval of the League's action, this being the normal role of the Association in respect of any of the leagues under its jurisdiction. It went beyond this and incorporated the League scheme in its own rules. In doing so it also formally prohibited an Associated Schoolboy signing as an apprentice for any other club. The F.A. Rule was subsequently amended to allow all professional clubs which have at least 12 professional players to sign Associated Schoolboys. This could have been done by the Association agreeing to proposals from management committees of the Southern and other major professional leagues to change their rules to allow them to operate a similar scheme. Incorporating these kinds of details in the Association's Rules produces a mixture of rules applying to the game in general, or to a major sector of it, and of rules primarily concerned with a particular league. Perhaps more important, it puts the Association in the position of having to enforce the rules, so involving it further in the day-to-day affairs of the League. In this and several other ways the authority of the Association is used to reinforce the power of the League. It appears to be administering League affairs without being in an effective position to do this.

385. One can understand that the Association must take account of any aspect of the game which attracts a great deal of public attention. Inevitably, therefore, if it is to be the national governing body for the sport in fact as well as in name, it must be drawn into many aspects of League football which in normal circumstances would be a matter for the management committee of the particular competition. Nevertheless, we think it would strengthen and clarify the independent position of the Association if its rules did not deal specifically with matters of primary concern to the Football League.

386. The ideal arrangement would be based on an acceptance of the fact that the Football League is, *vis-à-vis* the Football Association, a league like any other league, arrange their formal relations accordingly, and leave the League more free to administer its own affairs. Without this basic attitude the danger is that the Association will get more and more involved in the day-to-day affairs of the Football League to the detriment of its other responsibilities. There would still need to be an agreement about the release of players for international matches, the programme of such matches, and similar matters where the Association can fulfil its responsibilities only with the help and goodwill of the League Clubs. The Association's responsibility for discipline, either of players or crowds, would not be affected.

387. Even in the ideal position there would obviously be a great need for close and friendly collaboration between the top representatives of both bodies. The existence of the Standing Joint Committee, and the fact that the present Chairman of the Association is also Chairman of Sheffield Wednesday, are some guarantee that the views and problems of the League Clubs will be fairly considered.

THE GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

388. It would also help to reduce the present imbalance if the Association were in future to devote more of its attention and resources to the development and needs of the amateur game and of the clubs outside the League. We can illustrate what we mean by considering the way the Association has used its funds in the last few years. The Association's income fluctuates a good deal from year to year, for much of it is derived from international matches and therefore income is much higher in the years that England play Scotland and other attractive teams at home. In 1964, for example, when the international match was in Glasgow, the F.A.'s accounts showed a net loss of £34,000 of which, however, £14,000 was due to a loss on sale of investments. Since then the situation has greatly improved, partly by reason of the payment by the Pool Promoters Association and partly because of increased profits from Cup and international matches. In 1965 there was an overall surplus of £104,000 and in 1966, excluding the World Cup, the surplus was £136,000.

389. The revenue accounts of the Football Association are kept in a number of separate sections; e.g. international matches, Challenge Cup, amateur competitions, etc. The balances, plus or minus on each of these, are brought together in a consolidated account which shows the surplus or deficit for the year. Some items of expenditure are charged against a particular activity, e.g. expenditure on selection committee meetings is charged against the income from international matches, whereas the expenses of the Council and most other committees are shown as part of the general expenditure of the Association. As a result it is not easy to present a simple general picture of income and expenditure.

390. The income of the Association for each of the two years ending 31st December, 1965 and 1966, was approximately as in Table 16.

TABLE 16
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION INCOME 1965-66

	1965	1966
Net balances from:		
International and Representative Games ..	99,500	79,000
(Professional)		
F.A. Challenge Cup	64,500	63,200
Amateur Challenge Cup	5,500	6,200
Youth Challenge Cup	1,600	1,100
	<u>171,100</u>	<u>149,500</u>
Football Pools Promoters	35,700	80,000
Interest on Investments and Loans	10,300	51,700
Radio and Television Fees	10,800	9,700
Royalties and Publications	14,800	26,700
Entrance Fees and Annual Subscriptions	3,600	3,500
Sundry Income	3,200	3,300
	<u>£249,500</u>	<u>£324,400</u>

391. The expenditure of the Association for the same two years, excluding expenditure already taken into account in calculating the above income figures, was as in Table 17.

TABLE 17

FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION EXPENDITURE 1965-66

	1965 £	1966 £
Salaries, wages, superannuation etc.	56,700	68,000
Publications	12,900	16,900
Expenses of meetings	8,000	10,600
Printing, stationery and other administrative expenses	25,400	34,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Grants (mainly instructional)	103,000	129,500
Taxation (Income or Corporation Tax)	19,400	17,400
Loss on International and Representative Matches etc. (Amateur)	12,100	31,000
Contribution to Professional Footballers' Association Accident Fund	8,800	9,500
Loss on Sale of Investments	2,000	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	—	1,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total expenditure	145,300	188,400
Surplus added to Accumulated Fund	104,200	136,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	249,500	324,400
	<hr/>	<hr/>

392. Two features of these accounts disturb us, both pointing in the same direction; the small amount contributed to the development of the amateur game and its administration, and the accumulation of large surpluses.

393. In its evidence the Association stated that the County Associations were greatly in need of money and that more money was needed for coaching and other facilities for the amateur game. In view of this we find it difficult to understand why so little of the Association income is devoted directly to the amateur side of the game. It is not as though the Association were hard-pressed for money, for during these two years £240,000 was added to accumulated reserves. No doubt the policy of accumulation reflects an attitude derived from times when its finances were less rosy and less secure. No doubt also the policy was influenced by a desire to make sure that money was available for the proper staging of the World Cup. But these worries are now past. Its revenue reserves and surplus at the end of 1965 were £320,000 and by the end of 1966, excluding profits from the World Cup, these had risen to £460,000. Yet no grants were made to help the County Associations, only £17,000-£19,000 was spent on instruction and coaching for amateur teams, and there was an increase of less than £5,000 in loans to clubs for ground improvements in the two years. To this must be added the net loss of about £9,000 a year on amateur international and representative matches.

394. The figures of 1965-66 do not take account of receipts from the World Cup. This added about £200,000 (before tax) to the F.A.'s resources. We understand that the F.A.'s accounts for 1967 will show a surplus of around £300,000 before deduction of tax. If, as would appear likely, the same surplus is made for 1968, 1969 and 1970, i.e. until the World Cup, the accumulated surplus of the F.A. is likely to be increased from the accumulated balance at the end of 1966 of £460,000 by some £800,000 after allowing for Corporation tax, bringing the figure in 1970 up to over one million pounds.

395. We have already recommended that the local administration of the game should be strengthened by the appointment by the Football Association of a network of regional officers, helping the County Associations in all ways possible, but particularly concentrating on the administration of an extended coaching scheme and the recruitment, training and grading of referees. We see no reason why the Association should not be able to finance this development out of its own resources and have recommended accordingly. (*Paragraph 359.*)

396. We also urge the Association to devote more of its time and energies to examining ways in which football both as a sport and entertainment can be improved. It is noticeable, for example, that association football has received very little by way of grants. An alert national body ought to have done something about this. The development of regional stadia and multi sports centres, crowd behaviour, and the future of European and international football are matters which merit serious study.

397. In placing more emphasis on this kind of activity we **recommend** that the Association should make greater use of experts on particular committees and enquiries. Most public bodies do this. Providing they are in a minority and are used for matters on which their expertise gives them a special standing there is no danger to the representative and democratic character of the Association's institutions. We have in mind former professional players, experienced managers, coaches, and even management experts. Few, if any, of these are likely to find their way on to the Association's committees by the present process of selection.

398. This brings us to our final recommendation in respect of the Association. We are strongly of the opinion that the Association's present rule prohibiting or limiting the participation of former or current professional players in the administration of the game is out-of-date. Article 40 of the Articles of Association states: "No professional player, except by consent of the Council, shall be qualified to become or to continue a Member of the Council". Rule 31 of the Association goes much wider. It reads:

- (a) No professional player or apprentice, nor a professional reinstated after the 30th April, 1924, shall be allowed to serve on the Council of this Association, or be a shareholder in it. He shall not serve on the Committee of any other Association, League or Club, or represent his own or any other Association, League or Club at any Football Meeting.

(b) *Exemption*

The Council may, if they think fit, exempt such person from any of the restrictions of this Rule if he gives notice in writing to the Secretary of this Association that he has ceased to play football or if he is playing without remuneration.

399. We see no reason for these general prohibitions. No doubt there are some among current or former professional players whose character or record would make them totally unsuited for membership of the F.A. Council, a County Association or the management committee of any competition. But the same might be said of some members of the medical, legal or academic professions, or of builders, industrialists and indeed members of any trade or profession. This discrimination against those who have earned their money by playing the game is an unjustified slur on a great many people who have much

to offer to the administration of the game. In any case, people cannot elect themselves to the Council of the F.A. or to the various management bodies. They have to receive general support. The character and records of competing candidates will be known to those engaged in the election, who must be trusted to make a proper choice. **We recommend**, therefore, that the rules which prohibit or limit the participation of former or current professional players in the administration of the game should be abolished.

SCOTLAND AND WALES

400. Many of our general remarks about the structure of the governing bodies of the game in England apply also to Scotland and Wales. In both these countries the game owes a very great deal indeed to the devotion, hard work and voluntary efforts of those who run the clubs, the leagues and competitions, and the county, regional and national associations.

SCOTLAND

401. Football in Scotland has always been organised differently from English football. Unlike the English body, the Scottish Football Association, founded in 1873, has been willing to relinquish much of its direct authority over several grades of football by allowing no fewer than seven national associations affiliated to it to operate with a surprisingly large measure of autonomy. Although each accepts the ultimate authority of the S.F.A., in practice their constitutions and any changes they make in their rules are automatically accepted by the Council of that body.

402. The Council is composed of 45 members. Three Office Bearers (President, first Vice-President, and Treasurer) are elected at the Annual General Meeting. A second Vice-President and eight members are appointed by the Scottish Football League and one by the Army F.A. The remaining 32 members are nominated by the bodies affiliated to the Association as follows:

- (i) *Nine to represent the seven affiliated National Associations*; two each by the Scottish Amateur F.A. and the Scottish Junior F.A., and one each by the Scottish Churches F.A., Scottish Juvenile F.A., Scottish Schools F.A., Scottish Secondary Juvenile F.A. and Scottish Welfare F.A.
- (ii) *Eight to represent the 12 affiliated Associations*, which are Glasgow, Stirlingshire and Dunbartonshire, East of Scotland and Border Counties, the Southern Counties, Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Lanarkshire, Fifeshire, Perthshire, Angus, Aberdeenshire and North of Scotland.
- (iii) *Fifteen to represent the 72 clubs in full membership and five which are associated members, i.e. clubs which have not, as yet, served five years in membership. Of the 72 full members, 37 play in the Scottish League.*

The majority of the Council are Directors of Scottish League clubs, i.e. 29 out of 45, but only if there is no alternative are two Directors of the same club allowed to be members at the same time.

403. Though in some ways the Scottish F.A. operates on the same lines as the English F.A., there is one major distinction. Representation of the League and of the clubs in full membership is common to both countries. But predominantly the English F.A. is based on territorial representation—on the County Associations. In Scotland, however, though the country is divided into

twelve divisions there are also seven national associations performing functions which in England are performed either at Lancaster Gate or by the County Associations.

404. Thus the Scottish Junior Football Association, instituted in 1886, has full powers to govern and administer junior football, i.e. clubs with enclosed grounds whose players, amateur or professional, are neither currently registered for, nor have played in a cup tie for, a club in membership of the Scottish F.A. It has eleven affiliated County Associations, nine leagues under its jurisdiction, and promotes a national competition—the Scottish Junior Cup. Its affiliated County Associations also conduct cup competitions and in some instances leagues. It has 165 clubs in membership. Similarly, since 1922, there has been a Scottish Secondary Juvenile Football Association which caters for players under the age of 21. It runs a national cup competition and has eight County or District Associations which run 14 leagues. It has 225 clubs in membership, of which 81 cater for the under seventeens.

405. The major advantage of this form of organisation is that it enables attention to be concentrated on the needs of particular groups or sectors of football. Thus the Secondary Juvenile Association provides football for boys under 17 and between 17 and 21; and the Scottish Juvenile Association takes them up to the age of 27. The Junior Association provides football at a level just below that of the League. All these associations cover both amateurs and professionals. The Scottish Amateur Association contains only amateur clubs spread over some 64 leagues and associations catering for some 20,000 players. Of the 64 bodies, 23 also operate in youth football and 10 operate only as Summer Leagues, under special conditions. The Scottish Amateur Association organises the Scottish Amateur Cup, and the Scottish Universities Shield competition comes within its purview.

406. The disadvantages are perhaps more apparent. The existence of these independent national associations divides the game into somewhat artificial watertight compartments. Each national association has its rules and regulations, and over the years these can become barriers. Instead of a player moving from one club to another within a general framework of rules, he may find that his move involves changing from one national association to another. Thus a member of a club under the jurisdiction of the Secondary Juvenile Association has to move to a club under the jurisdiction of another national association when he passes the age of 21. In some cases the national association, either to protect itself or to improve its finances, requires payment of a fee in respect of a player moving to a club in another association. A player of a Secondary Juvenile club moving to a Junior club involves a fee of £12 if he goes as a full professional and £6 as a semi-professional. Acting as a clerical agency in all this is the Scottish F.A., registering all these players on a variety of forms A, B, Y, etc., and registering their transfers.

407. In the words of the Scottish Council of Physical Recreation, "There are far too many grades of football in Scotland; for example, there are professional and amateur seniors, professional and semi-professional juniors, first class juveniles, secondary juveniles, under-age juveniles, amateurs. This results in the fact that, even when the players are amateur, free movement between grades is not possible and many keen players are lost to the game. It may well happen that the only level of football available in a player's own locality is a grade for

which he is not eligible since he has 'transgressed' by having played in a different grade". The Scottish F.A. said that "Circumstances could arise in which a player might find it difficult, if not in extreme cases impossible, to have a game of football in Scotland". Clearly there is need for simplification.

408. Another disadvantage is that the central direction and leadership of the game in Scotland is fragmented and weakened. The business of the seven affiliated national associations is their business and is not the formal concern of the Scottish F.A. For this reason, and because the divisional nominees represent a much less significant part of the game than do the county nominees in England, the Scottish League is in a much more dominant position than is its English counterpart.

409. Considering the size of the country, the thin spread of population in some parts and the difficult economic times of recent years, the bodies governing the game in Scotland have done remarkably well. But things are unlikely to get better in future on their own. If Scottish football is to weather the difficulties ahead and take advantage of changing social patterns and attitudes, all sections of the game will have to pool their differences and pull together.

410. It is not going to be easy to achieve this. The present national associations are unlikely to hand over their functions to the Scottish F.A. unless they are quite sure that the new arrangements will be satisfactory for the aims and interests they represent. At the same time the game in Scotland could ill afford to lose the enthusiasm and voluntary effort which the leaders of these national associations have given for many years. It is perhaps unwise for a committee composed predominantly of Sassenachs to suggest that the model of the English F.A. has advantages and could be adapted to meet current Scottish problems.

411. To do so would involve the loss by the present national associations of their autonomy and their various local leagues and competitions being placed under the jurisdiction of a number of County or District Associations. Players would be under the jurisdiction of the S.F.A. in so far as they played for clubs in membership, but otherwise would be subject to the County or District Associations. Leagues would be dealt with similarly. The number of local representatives on the Council would need to be increased at the expense of those which represent League clubs. It would help in the transition to the new system if the existing national associations continued to have nominees on the Council. Though the Council is already large, we should like to see room made for representatives of the referees, secretaries, managers, and professional footballers. **We recommend** that the Scottish F.A. and the affiliated national associations should, as a matter of urgency, enter into discussions with a view to providing a single national governing body for the game in Scotland.

412. Article 34 of the Scottish Association prohibits a paid official of a club or an association and a professional player or a professional referee from being a member of the Council, though a former professional player or referee may be, if the Council is satisfied that he has permanently ceased to be so regarded. **We recommend** that this prohibition should be rescinded.

413. The Scottish F.A. formerly obtained most of its income from a 5 per cent levy on the gate receipts at the semi-final and final ties of the Scottish Association Cup and from the biennial Scotland-England match in Glasgow. Since 1966 its regular income has been greatly increased by the payment of

some £18,000 a year by the Pool Promoters Association. It is using £10,000 of this additional income to further youth football and to build up a small fund to meet the cost of the world youth competition to be held in 1970.

WALES

414. The Football Association of Wales, formed in 1876, is governed by a Council consisting of 14 members and four officers (President, two Vice-Presidents and an Honorary Treasurer). The Officers are elected at the Annual General Meeting. Twelve of the 14 members are elected by the clubs in full membership—half by the 61 clubs in North Wales and half by the 31 clubs in South Wales. The other two members are elected one each by the North Wales Coast F.A. and the South Wales and Monmouthshire F.A. The Welsh Football League has neither the financial strength nor the significance of the English and Scottish Football Leagues and has no special status in the Council. Nor have Cardiff City, Newport County, Swansea Town and Wrexham, which are members of the English Football League.

415. In general, the Welsh F.A. operates very much like the English F.A. It registers the professional players of all Welsh clubs and has general jurisdiction over the two Welsh professional leagues—the Welsh Football League and the Welsh League (Northern Section). It promotes three cup competitions—the Welsh Cup (for both professional and amateur teams), the Welsh Amateur Cup and the Welsh Youth Cup. The first has recently become more attractive since the winner qualifies to take part in the European Cup-Winners' Cup. It is responsible for selecting teams to represent Wales, and so on. For the rest, football is administered by four area associations: South Wales and Monmouthshire (429 clubs); West Wales (193); Monmouthshire County (188); and North Wales Coast (104). As in England, the effective day-to-day government of the game, referees, discipline, etc., are provided by these area associations, not by the national association.

416. Again we are impressed by all that has been done by voluntary effort and devotion on shoe-string budgets. We have, however, two criticisms. One of the main functions of a national football association in any country is to provide a meeting place, a parliament for all the various interests and areas. As at present constituted the Council of the Welsh Association is insufficiently representative to perform this function effectively. The great majority of the members are elected by the 160 clubs in full membership of the Association. In contrast, the 900 or so clubs under the jurisdiction of the area associations have only two representatives. The Welsh Schools' Association, though affiliated, has no representative, unlike in England and Scotland. We were not impressed by the arguments in favour of maintaining the present constitution.

417. We understand that, perhaps stimulated in part by the Committee's meeting with representatives of the Welsh F.A., moves are afoot to give West Wales, Monmouthshire and the Welsh Schools representation on the Council. This change is long overdue. We also understand that associations are likely to be formed in Mid-Wales and North East Wales. These should also have one representative each. Representatives of referees, secretaries, managers and professional footballers should also be added. In order not to increase the size of the Council the number of representatives elected by clubs in full membership

should be reduced. This re-organisation should greatly improve the balance and representative character of the Council and **we recommend** accordingly.

418. Rule 42 of the Association prohibits registered professional players, registered referees and paid officials of an association, league or club, serving on its Council. A registered professional or paid official cannot serve on the committee of any football association or league within the Association's jurisdiction **We recommend** that the rule be rescinded.

419. Our second criticism is more general. Frankly, we are disturbed by the lack of drive and forward looking views evidenced by the Football Association of Wales. We appreciate that it has been short of money. Even so we formed the impression that the welfare of the game in Wales has suffered from an unnecessary and unfortunate rivalry between north and south.

420. The Football Association of Wales receives no money from the Pools Promoters and is dependent for its income on gate receipts from International Matches and the Cup Competition. On average it has received about £15,000 a year from these, to which can be added about £3,000 a year from interest on investments. The financial resources of the area and county associations are even more meagre.

CHAPTER VII

FINANCE

421. Our terms of reference require us to enquire into the state of football at all levels, including finance "and the means by which the game may be developed for the public good". Having surveyed the main aspects of the game it is now our responsibility to advise the Government on the financial implications of our findings. We therefore propose to outline the financial needs, to consider whether these can be met from existing sources and where it appears to us that this is not probable after a reasonable period, to suggest other methods of financing them. This inevitably leads to a consideration of the proposition in the Sports Facilities Bill of December, 1964, for the establishment of a Board which, by virtue of having the exclusive right to run or authorise pool betting on football, would be able to make grants towards the promotion of football.

NEEDS OF THE AMATEUR GAME

422. In Chapter II we showed that the amateur side of the game had two main financial needs—for coaching and for improved facilities. The need for further development of coaching also subdivides into annual costs for salaries and expenses on the one hand and facilities specifically for coaching on the other. Under the existing arrangements involving the Sports Council and the Department of Education and Science, grants have been paid to the Football Association towards the salaries of four regional coaches and a general extension of the coaching scheme might attract further grants. But some part of the salaries and the administrative costs would still have to be found by the national association. In England we think that the improved financial position of the Football Association should enable it to bear these costs even for a much extended scheme; but the cost of developing coaching will bear harder on Scotland and very hard indeed on Wales. If any national association contemplates special coaching of selected groups and assisting such selected players with their costs they may have to bear the cost.

423. In conjunction with the extension of coaching schemes in the three countries, there is a need for coaching centres with floodlit non-turf and grass playing areas, indoor space, a meeting/lecture room, changing accommodation etc. Two centres, which have other sports facilities plus residential accommodation, already exist in England at Lilleshall and Crystal Palace. Run by the C.C.P.R. they cater for a wide range of sports and are used in soccer for special coaching courses, many of them arranged by the Football Association and for training and practice by individual clubs. Other similar centres are planned in all three countries. They are to be financed in various ways, but to the extent that the centres can be suitably designed and equipped for soccer coaching, it would be appropriate if contributions could be made towards the capital costs from football. Only a limited number of larger centres of this kind with residential accommodation are needed. It has been demonstrated often enough in sport that supply creates demand, but we think that seven or eight of these

centres spread through the three countries would probably be sufficient for the foreseeable future, a requirement which is largely met by the centres in existence or at the planning stage.

424. There is a pressing need for a substantial number of non-residential centres, strategically placed to meet local demands. These could be built, owned and run by the larger Local Authorities, perhaps again with some contribution towards costs from football. In some instances the local professional club or even local industry might wish to contribute to the capital costs in return for some rights of use. We make a recommendation in paragraph 456 to facilitate the financing of this. The facilities could be used for certain other sports in addition to football, with the Local Authority recovering all or part of the running costs by charging fees for use by schools, clubs of all kinds, governing or organising bodies such as a regional or county Football Association. While our main concern as a committee has been with the needs of football, at certain points we have felt it necessary to examine these needs in relation to those of sport as a whole. Coaching centres, both the larger residential ones and the smaller local ones, should cater for a range of sports, with football paying its share towards capital and running costs for use of them.

425. Our sample survey of the facilities available for the amateur player revealed that, outside congested urban areas, there was reasonable provision of playing pitches but that changing facilities were very inadequate as was the provision of all-weather floodlit pitches and some other specialised needs. These deficiencies need remedying. A club has every incentive to improve a ground it owns and may apply for a grant to do so. But only a very small proportion of clubs own their own grounds—the bulk are hired from the local authority or from some farmer or private landowner. The local authorities, in all three countries, have done a very great deal to meet the needs of football and other sports. But their resources are limited and there are many other pressing claims on them.

426. The powers of the Education Departments to give direct financial assistance to amateur sport derive from the Physical Training and Recreation Act, 1937, as amended by the Education Act, 1944, and the Local Government Act, 1958, and, as applied to Scotland, by the Education (Scotland) Act, 1945, and the Local Government and Miscellaneous Financial Provisions (Scotland) Act, 1958. The powers relate to assistance to local and national voluntary organisations. The Act lays down that grants to local organisations shall not extend to the maintenance of facilities, save in exceptional circumstances, and in practice grants to local bodies are confined to capital expenditure.

427. There is no power to make specific grants to Local Authorities except in Scotland where, under the amendments made to the Act by the Local Government and Miscellaneous Financial Provisions (Scotland) Act, 1958, district councils remain eligible for capital grants. Expenditure incurred by Local Authorities (other than district councils in Scotland) by virtue of their powers under the Physical Training and Recreation Act, 1937, as extended by the Physical Training and Recreation Act, 1958, in the provision of facilities for physical training and recreation is relevant expenditure for the purpose of the Local Government Act, 1958 (for Scotland the Local Government and Miscellaneous Financial Provisions (Scotland) Act, 1958) under which general grants are made to Local Authorities.

428. The Sports Council was set up in 1965 "to advise on matters relating to the development of amateur sport and physical recreation services and to foster co-operation among the statutory authorities and voluntary organisations". It meets under the Chairmanship of Mr. Denis Howell, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education and Science, with a special responsibility for sport. Its 24 members, who include members from England, Scotland and Wales, serve in a personal capacity and not as representatives of any particular sport or recreation.

429. At present grants are made to local voluntary bodies towards the cost of provision and extension of such sports facilities as playing fields, pavilions, swimming pools, etc. A grant of up to half of the approved cost may be made subject to a maximum grant, normally of £10,000. In 1966-67 expenditure on capital grants was £634,094 in England and Wales, and £127,769 in Scotland. These, however, cover all forms of sport. Only £34,107 went to association football in England and Wales, and only £2,305 in Scotland. In contrast £87,012 and £3,970 went to cricket, £39,008 and £32,242 to golf, and £89,043 and £11,306 to rugby football.

430. The main reason for the apparent neglect of soccer is that grants are normally made only to clubs who either own their grounds or have them on a fairly long lease. These limitations rule out most soccer clubs. Possibly an ancillary reason has been the lack of awareness of clubs of the grants available, and here guidance and active help from the national and local football associations might have produced better results. Even so the amount of money available in direct grants for all sport is small, though of course Local Authorities spend a good deal of money on providing recreation facilities of all kinds. It is clear that the smallness of the sum available for direct grants and the exclusion of Local Authorities and most clubs from being possible beneficiaries mean that the needs of football cannot be met this way. The money will therefore have to be found elsewhere.

NEEDS OF THE PROFESSIONAL GAME

431. In Chapter III our study of the finances of the professional clubs revealed two problems—annual and accumulated deficits and the need for ground improvements.

432. We do not think a general case can be made out for public subsidies being paid to professional clubs to meet deficits on profit and loss account though we would not exclude the rare occasion when temporary financial disaster threatened to drive a club out of existence. The professional game is a commercial business in the sense that its existence and financial viability depend on the provision of entertainment which the public are willing to pay to see. If the public are unwilling to pay, either directly at the turnstiles or indirectly by way of sweepstakes or supporters clubs, then the directors must find ways either of attracting more support or of reducing their expenditure. Any continuous public subsidy would relieve the directors of the financial checks essential for the proper function of management—and almost certainly involve the grant giving body in exercising increasingly detailed control over the recipient clubs e.g. over the number of professionals they could employ and at what wages, and what they could spend on transfer fees.

433. At the moment there is an element of what might be termed subsidy in the finances of all English and Scottish League clubs, for example in the distribution of the payment each League receives from the "pools". There is also a measure of redistribution of income between clubs (see paragraph 131.) Thus the English Football League helps member clubs in three ways: (i) by relieving them of certain costs e.g. referees' and linesmen's expenses (also the practice of the Scottish League); (ii) by distributing a substantial part of the "pools money" equally among the 92 clubs; and (iii) by levying 4 per cent on net match receipts and distributing the money equally among the 92 clubs. The first two ways⁽¹⁾ treat the rich and poor alike but the third results in a substantial transfer of income from the First to the Third and Fourth Divisions. The Scottish Football League distributes the balance of its "pools money" according to the number of League points each club gains during the season.

434. There is something odd about a scheme of central distribution which adds to the income of clubs which may have to pay higher Corporation Tax as a result whilst still leaving some clubs on the edge of bankruptcy. The English League's 4 per cent levy might be raised to say 6 per cent or 7 per cent so that even more money went to the Third or Fourth Division clubs. Though we think it would be good for the two Leagues to review their present schemes from this point of view the general problem cannot be solved in this way. For one thing, even if the whole of the surplus earned during the three years 1963-64/1965-66 by English League clubs had been paid over to the clubs in deficit there would still have remained a deficit of £587,000. For another the long term problems of making all league clubs financially viable would not be helped by the redistribution of income between rich and poor clubs. Clubs which came to rely on such contributions for much of their income would have less incentive to balance their accounts and progressive management would not be encouraged.

435. We now turn to two matters which could have an important bearing on the financial position of League clubs but about which we have not come to any firm conclusions. They are the possibility of introducing a group scheme for taxation purposes and the televising of live matches.

436. Because the two Leagues already provide group services and subventions for member clubs, e.g. by meeting the cost of referees and linesmen and handling television contracts, and pool part of their clubs' earnings for redistribution, it has been suggested to us that they might go a stage further and operate a group relief scheme as provided for in the Finance Act, 1967. This is an arrangement whereby a company which is a member of a group can surrender the tax relief attributable to its own losses to another member of the same group which is making profits. In order that clubs in a league could set off their profits and losses it would be necessary for them all to be subsidiaries of one company. This company could be an *ad hoc* holding company—each League presumably operating on this basis. Assuming that such a holding company had no purpose except to combine the member clubs for tax purposes, it would be necessary to create an equity class of shares held by the company so that clubs would all be its "subsidiaries" but without subjecting their affairs to its *de facto* control.

437. Any such solution of this problem is bound to be artificial because the group so created would be very different from the normal commercial group of

(1) And so, though to a lesser extent does the distribution of the share of the net receipts of F.A. Cup ties pooled among the participating clubs.

companies for which the relief was intended. Nevertheless the two Leagues may wish to examine the possibility. In 1965-66 in spite of an overall loss of £1.4 million, English League clubs paid £258,000 net in Income, now Corporation Tax. If for tax purposes the operations of each League could be treated as a whole the aggregate losses could be offset against the aggregate profits, and a smaller sum or no sum paid to the Inland Revenue. Should either League successfully undertake this operation we think the money so saved should be used by the Management Committee for loans and grants for ground improvements.

438. Another possibility is a substantial increase in fees paid by the B.B.C., the independent television companies and others for the right to televise and transmit matches live. At the moment neither League allows matches to be televised live. Only the F.A. Cup Final, played after all League clubs have finished their fixtures, is televised live. The World Cup matches in 1966 took place, of course, outside the season. The disagreement between the B.B.C. and the League about regularly televising matches live turns on the effect such programmes would have on ground attendances.

439. It is clear that if one or more attractive matches were televised nationally on a Saturday afternoon many potential spectators all over the country would stay in and watch rather than visit their local grounds. For this reason programmes of Match of the Day type are shown late in the evening or at times when no matches are being played. This danger to clubs can be substantially reduced by the system of Pay Television. Whereas the two public television systems must transmit the match to all viewers over a very wide area of reception, Pay T.V. can localise transmission. Thus if Manchester United were playing at Tottenham transmission could be confined to the Manchester area. Moreover the owner of each set would have to pay a fee for viewing, probably of 7s. 6d. or 10s. and football would receive a substantial part of this. At the moment development of this system is limited by the number of people with pay sets and by the fact that the company is licenced to operate only in London and Sheffield. It could, however, develop into quite big money for the clubs whose matches were allowed to be televised.

440. Recently the B.B.C. made an offer of approaching £3 million over a three year period, the largest single offer made by them for a single sport. In return they wished to televise one live match every Thursday evening during the season, and to continue their present Match of the Day, Cup Final and certain other presentations. The Joint Television Committee of the League and the F.A. did not accept the offer. The B.B.C. pointed out that very few League matches take place on Thursday evenings and therefore no conflict of loyalties would arise. They also asserted that televising of good football would encourage interest in the game and thus in the long run raise attendances. The League clubs fear that a regular weekly programme of live matches, selected by the B.B.C. for their entertainment value, would be bound to reduce the incentive to attend the local ground, even on Saturdays. They could well be right. The N.O.P. Survey of December, 1966⁽¹⁾ showed that already 44 per cent of the population aged 16 and over watched football on television at least once in the average week (85 per cent saw the World Cup on T.V.). It also showed that 38 per cent of all those who said they were interested in football did not attend because they could see matches on T.V.

(1) English Professional Football, National Opinion Polls Ltd, for the *Daily Mail* 1967.

441. In the present context of the financial condition of the League we make two comments. First, mass use of television is likely to widen the gap between the top and the bottom clubs. Judged in terms of national entertainment value a clash between two top First Division clubs is likely to be preferred every time to the usual Fourth Division match. Second, even if the fee income were large enough and distributed in such a way as to favour the lower division clubs, the professional game would still be the loser if attendances were to fall. Spectators are as much a part of League football as players, officials and directors. It would be most unfortunate if this were to be lost sight of because of the attractions of increasing handouts from the pools and from T.V.

442. Who is right? The B.B.C. who say that transmission of a weekly live match would encourage not discourage attendances or the League clubs who say the opposite? Without consumer research, possibly over a longish trial period, there is no way of finding the correct answer.

NEEDS OF THE GOVERNING BODIES

443. The financial position of the English and Scottish Football Associations has greatly improved in the last two or three years as a result of the payments from the Pool Promoters Association.

444. The need for the pools to make a contribution to the game was recognised many years ago by the main pools promoters. An earlier offer of a contribution to the League was refused, but in 1959 the members of the Pool Promoters Association entered into an agreement with the Football League (acting also for the Scottish League) to pay an annual royalty for the use of the fixture lists prepared by the League. The agreement was superseded in 1964. Under the present agreement, which runs for 15 years from the 1st August, 1964, members of the Pool Promoters Association (which covers some 90 per cent of the pools) pay to the League a royalty of 1 per cent on gross stakes, after deduction of Pool Betting Duty, in respect of all coupons using the fixture lists of the League or the Scottish League. There is a guaranteed minimum annual payment of £500,000 provided the total gross receipts of the P.P.A. do not fall below £65 million in any one year. One quarter of the proceeds goes to the Scottish League. In the season 1966-67 the Football League received in total (i.e. including the Scottish share) £806,000 from the six Pools Promoters, and £16,000 from other users of their fixture lists, making £822,000 in all.

445. In January, 1966, the Pool Promoters Association also entered into an agreement with the Football Association (acting also for the Scottish F.A.). The agreement provides for a payment of 0.14 per cent of the gross stakes, subject again to the deduction of the Pool Betting Duty. Like the other it is for 15 years and dates from 1st August, 1965, renewable for a further term of 15 years at the option of the Association or of the Promoters. In the year ending 31st December, 1966, the F.A. received £79,966 from this source and the Scottish F.A. received £18,792.

446. As a result of these two agreements the bodies concerned are now better off to the extent of some £900,000 per annum. This money has been of great benefit to the game. As we have seen the money paid to the two Leagues goes directly or indirectly to the 129 clubs. It has helped to keep some clubs alive and others to function at a higher standard. The danger is that increasing

contributions of this kind may discourage clubs from being more enterprising or adjusting their expenditure to their circumstances.

447. The English Football Association had an annual income of some £300,000 in 1966 and spent only two-thirds of that. We understand that its income has greatly increased since then. The County F.A.s, the all purpose administrators of the game throughout the country, will need substantial help mainly through some form of semi-regional structure. The Football Association's finances should now be able to bear this development. It should also, with some extra grant, be able to meet the running costs of more extensive coaching facilities.

448. The Scottish F.A. has, of course, a much smaller budget but with the extra £18,000 a year from the pools it should be sufficient for most purposes. The Welsh F.A. receives nothing from the Pools Promoters presumably because it has no fixtures which the Promoters depend upon. (The two other national F.A.s have, of course, an important series of cup ties). The administration of the game in Wales—at national and local level—will need some outside financial support.

449. One aspect of the League's position deserves attention. Their agreement with the Pool Promoters Association arose out of a High Court decision that the use and printing of League fixtures without permission was a breach of copyright. The P.P.A. did not appeal against this decision. It is understood, however, that had they done so the decision might have been reversed so unclear is the law on this point. **We recommend** therefore that at the first appropriate opportunity the English and Scottish Leagues' copyright in their fixtures should be confirmed. Apart from clarifying and strengthening their position in this country, the statutory confirmation would probably enable more adequate payments to be secured from the Pools of other countries, many of which use English and Scottish fixtures. It would also reinforce the bargaining position of the two Football Associations.

450. P.E.P. in their report suggested that the Football Association and Football League should apply for charitable status as recreational charities for at least part of their activities and thus secure certain tax advantages. Presumably if these bodies could qualify so could the corresponding bodies in Scotland and Wales, the County F.A.s and indeed many other bodies in the game. We must confess to a sense of bafflement at the interpretation of the term "charity" for tax purposes. We are advised that the Chancery Division of the High Court have several times held that the encouragement of any kind of sport is not a legally charitable object. Charitable status has been granted to some sports organisations but for reasons unconnected with their sporting activities, e.g. where a body is an adjunct of an educational institution, or is for the promotion of animal breeding, or for mental and physical health, or is for the relief of the disabled, or to fit Her Majesty's subjects for the defence of Her realm.

451. It is difficult to argue that football should be treated differently for tax purposes from other sports and recreations. Nevertheless we think we ought to put on record that, we find the present position very unsatisfactory. We think that the time has come for a fresh look at the treatment of sports clubs and organisations from the viewpoint of taxation and **recommend accordingly**⁽¹⁾.

(1) A similar point was made by the Wolfenden Committee on Sport and the Community (1960) page 64. (Central Council of Physical Recreation).

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

452. In Chapter III we suggested there were three kinds of capital development needed by the professional clubs:

- (i) General improvement to grounds—to make them more comfortable and more in keeping with the rising standards of living likely to be demanded, certainly by the elderly and by women spectators.
- (ii) A few super grounds or stadia consistent with the international standing of our top clubs.
- (iii) Ground improvements linked with communal facilities or developments in the form of multi-sports centres.

453. It is obvious that the amount of money involved in these three kinds of development would be very large indeed, even if spread over 10 to 15 years. Where can this money be found? We have made several suggestions: by a levy on high transfer fees, by raising more capital by offering commercial rates of return and the sale of long leases on seats and boxes, by the use of funds possibly released by the group treatment of clubs for tax purposes, and by associating Local Authorities with certain kinds of development.

454. The graded levy on transfer fees of over £25,000 is recommended partly to put a break on the ever rising level of fees and partly to redress the tax advantage which money spent on players has over money spent on ground improvements. The more effective it is in achieving the former the less the levy will yield for the latter. But at the rates suggested in paragraph 303 it could produce about £75,000 a year for the English League and about £15,000 for the Scottish League. Either in the form of outright grants or cheap loans this money should be used to encourage selected schemes. It is not a lot but it is a help and it would be money wholly under the control of the Leagues.

455. We hope that some of the major English clubs will be able to raise risk capital if the rate of return they can offer is increased from $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to 15 per cent. Some of these clubs can offer sporting contests more continuously attractive than anything else offered in the world of entertainment. This is a sound basis on which to build better general and social facilities which should amply repay the extra capital invested.

456. About two-thirds of the amateur clubs play on grounds owned by Local Authorities. The proportion is higher in the new towns. The indications are that local Councils will be expected to do even more in the future. True they have great and growing responsibilities for health, education and other major public services. But in deciding their priorities for capital expenditure they cannot ignore the new claims of leisure and sport in a society with falling hours of work and rising incomes. We see opportunities for new kinds of activity. For example, we should like to see a major local council join forces with a League club and perhaps other sport organisations and help finance and organise multi-sports complex or centre as an experiment. Many League clubs already rent their ground from the local council and some have received help in improving their stands and facilities. The main local football club plays a major role in most parts of the country, as a sport, as an entertainment and as a focus of local loyalties, and could therefore be a fruitful starting point for developing social and leisure facilities in the area. It would obviously help desirable developments of this kind if money were available specially for the purpose. In particular

we would welcome statutory amendments authorising the Education Departments to make matching grants to professional clubs to build sports facilities which will be open to *substantial* community use. This would benefit both the amateur and the professional game and would specifically encourage the community role of professional clubs. **We recommend** accordingly.

THE PROPOSAL FOR A LEVY BOARD

457. We have now reviewed the financial needs of the game. We have shown that some can be met within the existing resources of the various bodies concerned and that some are not suitably met by the use of public funds. But some very important needs are unlikely to be met, at least not at the pace and to the extent we are convinced are desirable. In particular there is the need for improved facilities for the great mass of amateur clubs in the three countries. There is also the development of grounds to provide regional stadia in a few cases and communal-multi-sports centres in others. There are also a number of other projects—physical facilities for coaching, for example, which deserve early attention.

458. This extra money will have to come from the public in one form or other. The general case for spending more public money on facilities for football is straightforward. Here is a game which provides healthy exercise and pleasure for a million players and as many spectators. It attracts mass press, radio and television coverage and provides interest, excitement and topics of conversation for millions who neither play nor patronise their local ground. It is the national game. England's success in the World Cup and Celtic's in the European Cup were a recognition of Britain's place in this world wide competitive sport. As such it is not getting its fair share of public money. It receives less direct grant than several other sports with much less mass appeal. It receives less national help than horse racing. In its turn, sport as a whole receives much less money than do the arts from the Arts Council.

459. It may be said that when expenditure on essential services is being cut or deferred is not a good time to advocate more public spending on anything. We appreciate the need for economy in all aspects of national life. We trust, however, that the various measures being taken will remove the chronic balance of payments problem and allow the country to take full value of its great industrial and financial resources. In any case, we were asked to look ahead and do not feel obliged, therefore, to confine ourselves to the immediate situation.

460. The administrative and financial arrangement which we find most attractive is the establishment of a board financed by a small levy on the Pools. This could provide a body which could concentrate on the special needs of football and be financed from a source arising from the existence and popularity of football. The game is the basis for a considerable and profitable industry. In 1966-67 £122 million was staked on football pools and though the Pool Promoters Association refused our request to reveal details of their accounts and their total profits there is reason to believe that after covering all expenses liberally, these profits are of the order of not less than £3 million a year.

461. The analogy with horse racing, though not exact, is worth drawing. The Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Act, 1963, established a Horserace Levy Board

responsible for assessing and collecting a levy and for applying it to the improvement of breeds of horses, the advancement or encouragement of veterinary science or veterinary education and the improvement of horse racing. The income of the Board is obtained from two sources—from bookmakers, partly by way of a payment per office or place of business and partly according to profitability, and from the totalisator. About £3 million is thus made available annually.

462. This statutory levy was imposed by an Act of Parliament with the general support of the House of Commons. Without drawing too invidious a comparison, horse racing may be the sport of kings but it is hardly, betting apart, a sport of the masses. The levy was imposed because it was appreciated that if horse racing declined so would betting—the two are closely related. The same cannot be said of football. Nevertheless the Pools exist because there is football and because the clubs are household names.

463. This £3 million a year to horse racing compares unfavourably with the less than £1 million paid by the Pools to the English and Scottish F.A.s and Leagues. Having regard to the needs of football, and the much wider degree of participation, whether as player or spectator, which the game attracts we think that football is under-helped.

464. We therefore make the following recommendations:

- (i) A levy of 1 per cent should be made on the gross proceeds of all pools, after the deduction of the Pool Betting tax levied by the Government. It would be levied on all football pools, not just those managed by the Pool Promoters Association. It would be easier and cheaper to levy than the racehorse levy for the Customs and Excise Department already have all the necessary information in collecting the levy of 25 per cent made by the Government. In the year ended 31st March, 1967, some £122 million was staked in football pools out of which tax of £30.5 million was paid. In that year, therefore, the new levy would have raised £915,000. The Board of Customs and Excise estimate⁽¹⁾ a 10 per cent increase for 1967–68, so that a 1 per cent levy should produce about £1 million. This in itself is not a large sum but it would be in addition to the money which the game already receives from this source. Moreover, we envisage that much of the new money would take the form of pump priming and therefore the beneficial effect should be much greater than the total of the levy.

We make this recommendation on the assumption that a substantial part of the levy will come out of the profits of the Pools Promoters. At the moment, pools promoters are required to publish their profits if these are in excess of 3 per cent of their total turnover. Presumably, at the time this rate was fixed, a profit of up to 3 per cent on turnover was considered not unreasonable. If the levy we recommend is accepted, the figure of 3 per cent should probably be reduced at the same time, thus implying that a lower return is now desirable. Otherwise the levy may merely reduce the odds available to the pools investors.

- (ii) The spending of the levy would be administered by a Football Levy Board appointed partly by the Government and partly by certain

⁽¹⁾ 58th Report of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, 1967 (page. 116).

representative bodies on the model approved by Parliament in the Horserace Levy Board. The Chairman of that body and two other members are appointed by the Home Secretary; two are appointed by the Jockey Club; one by the National Hunt Committee and two are ex-officio. Similarly in the case of the Football Levy Board we think that the Chairman and two members should be appointed by a Minister, presumably in this case the Secretary of State for Education and Science, and should have no direct connection with any of the main bodies or clubs in football. The other members are more difficult to determine for unlike horse racing there are separate national bodies for association football for England, Scotland and Wales. There are also such important bodies as the English and Scottish Football Leagues. To give all equal representation would probably be unfair. We are therefore inclined to think that the English F.A. should be entitled to appoint three representatives, not more than one of whom should be from the professional side of the game, the Scottish F.A. be entitled to two and the Welsh F.A. be entitled to one. This composition would produce a Board of nine members, one larger than the Horserace Board but not unduly large having regard to the range of interests involved.

- (iii) The money should be used for the improvement of facilities for association football in the three countries. We doubt whether the terms of reference need closer definition than that. We have already indicated the kind of need which we think deserves outside help and the kind which we think ought to be dealt with in other ways. Any governing body or club should be free to apply for a grant or a loan. The Board must also have the power to work in conjunction with Local Authorities. But the Board should not adopt a passive role. It should take a positive and creative view of the long term needs of the game in the way of modern grounds and facilities. It should aim to stimulate new investment through the involvement of all the interests concerned—clubs, Local Authority, and possibly private capital. It should use its limited funds to encourage partnerships of this kind. Though its primary purpose would be to develop facilities for football some of the expenditure it would generate could be of benefit to other sports.

465. The new small levy would not be in substitute for but in addition to the existing payments made by the Pools Promoters to the four English and Scottish bodies. For one thing the agreements have only recently been signed and have another 12 or 13 years to run. But apart from that, it will make for convenience of administration if the present payments and the new levy are kept separate. The money which goes to the two League helps to keep the main professional clubs in existence and at a better standard. The money which goes to the two F.A.s is essential if the game is to be administered effectively. Had this money not been made available it would either have had to be found from some other source or the game as a whole would have suffered. The continuation of this money will enable the Levy Board to concentrate on a more limited capital area and therefore enable it to be more effective. Put another way, our new proposal, if accepted, would have involved the Pools in 1966-67, in providing £1.9 million a year of which, in current terms £800,000 would be for the administration and maintenance of League football, £100,000 would be for the general administration of the game and £1 million would be for improving

facilities, mainly for amateur clubs but, in selected cases, for professional clubs. The benefits would thus be well balanced.

466. These are modest sums whether measured by those made available for horse racing, the mass pleasure which such expenditure could give and the profits of those who run pools. Nor would the new levy be a serious threat to the money which the Chancellor of the Exchequer obtains each year from the same source. We hope that the very modesty of our proposal will charm the Government and Parliament into giving general support to the necessary legislation.

MINORITY REPORTS

CHAPTER IV. THE PLAYERS—SHAMATEURISM

467. I am unable to support in full the section in Chapter 4 (paragraphs 239 to 250) dealing with shamateurism in English football. While I agree with many of the sentiments expressed, I cannot support the recommendation for a new category of player, a "semi-professional" or Form Z player. As described, the Form Z player would not be different in any important respect from the present part-time professional player and it is difficult, therefore, to see how he could have any major impact on shamateurism. He would complicate the organisation of the game when the other recommendations in the report seek in the main to simplify it.

468. I strongly support the view that the only long term solution to shamateurism in sport is to make competitions at the levels where shamateurism exists, open to those who are paid for taking part and those who are not. If competitions are made open in this way, there can be no need for shamateurism. In English football, the competition which undoubtedly does most to encourage shamateurism is the Amateur Challenge Cup, run by the Football Association. Success in the Amateur Cup can mean a great deal to clubs and I regret that my colleagues have not felt able to recommend unequivocally that, suitably re-named, it be made open.

469. If the Football Association were to make the Amateur Cup an open competition, it could confine it to the clubs which enter it at the moment; or it might consider drawing into it professional clubs from outside the Football League, or even establishing an additional competition, run on similar lines, which could include these. The aim would be to provide graded open competitions which permitted teams of similar standard to meet regardless of status. It would not be hard to find suitable names for the open competitions and the Association's income from these would replace its income from the Amateur Cup.

470. Though making the Amateur Cup open would represent a major first step towards eliminating shamateurism from the game in England, it need not prevent those responsible for other competitions from restricting these to particular categories of player. The Football Association would be giving an important lead, yet would not be interfering with the rights of other bodies to organise their competitions as they wished. Football at the lower levels would be largely unaffected, but at the level of senior amateur football where shamateurism exists the impact would be considerable. Without the Amateur Cup there is a strong possibility that other competitions catering for senior amateur clubs would in time also be made open, but this would be in a process of natural development rather than by direct imposition. It is unlikely in these times that another amateur cup competition of high standing, not organised by the Football Association, would emerge.

471. There is no evidence that open competition would be administratively difficult and a large number of competitions exist in different parts of England which are already open, in the sense that both amateur and professional players as at present defined play in them. Many local and regional leagues are open, as also is the Football League. All players must be registered with the leagues in which they play and in addition those receiving payment have contracts or agreements with their clubs covering details of payment and other related matters. It would be fair to say that open competition has been tested and found to be workable in football.

472. It is inevitable that shamateurism will increase rather than decrease in the future as social and economic changes blur even further the distinction between amateur and professional players. Open competition will have to spread in football as it has and will in other sports. For these reasons, and those outlined in the preceding paragraphs, I strongly urge the Football Association to make the Amateur Challenge Cup an open competition.

473. There have been suggestions from time to time that the Football Association should abolish entirely the distinction between amateur and professional players, and the Association itself considered this possibility in 1965 (see paragraph 241). But while there is much to be said for abolishing the distinction, I believe that making the Amateur Cup an open competition is a necessary and helpful first step. In addition to the Amateur Challenge Cup, the Football Association runs a Sunday Cup and a County Youth Challenge Cup specifically for amateur players, and abolishing the distinction would have implications for all three competitions. There is also the problem of selecting English amateur representative teams and contributing English players to British teams taking part in the Olympic Games football tournament. If the Amateur Cup were made open and if there were developments in this direction at Olympic level—which is a growing possibility—other changes could well take care of themselves.

W. J. SLATER.

CHAPTER VI. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GAME—F.A. COUNCIL

474. I am unable to support the section in Chapter VI (paragraphs 364 to 399) dealing with the Football Association, in particular that part of it dealing with the Council of the Association and possible changes in its membership. I feel the section does not emphasise enough the remoteness of the Council from the actual playing of the game today, a remoteness which results partly from the advanced age of many of its members and partly from their lack of experience as players, coaches, managers and, to a lesser extent, referees.

475. The recommendation that no member of the Council should be over 70 years of age is not far reaching enough as a reform. Football is a young man's game; the vast majority of players have finished active participation at half that age. The basic problem is that members of the Council remain in membership for such long periods: 20 years is common and 30 years by no means rare. Membership of this kind over many years can seriously restrict the formulation of new ideas, directly and also indirectly, by frustrating the efforts of younger persons to enter administration. In my view the Association should, as a positive act to encourage a greater influx of new, younger members, impose a limit on the length of time a member may serve on its Council, e.g. 10 years, with some flexibility to allow for the election of officers.

476. The lack of experience which Council members have as players, coaches, managers, referees, must be a severe handicap to its work. As far as one can see not a single current member of the Council has played or coached the game at the highest level, certainly not in recent years. A particularly important function of the Football Association is to give informed leadership in the technical aspects of the game—coaching and instruction, discipline, playing conditions, and the like—and it is difficult to see how it can give this leadership without a substantial number of serving members on its Council and committees who are or who have in recent years been close to the playing of the game. The Association can call on valuable advice from the England team manager and from its Director of Coaching but neither of these is a member of the Council, able as such to take part in decisions about policy.

477. The recommendations that the Referees, Professional Footballers, and Secretaries and Managers Associations be represented on the Football Association Council and that the restriction preventing former and current professional players from serving on the Council be removed are welcome and necessary but they will have only a limited impact on membership. The representatives of the three Associations could not be more than a few in number and making professional players eligible for membership will not ensure that they are elected. Currently the only avenue to membership of the Council is lengthy service in administration, which inevitably rules out most of those concerned with the playing of the game. Clearly, experienced administrators are essential on both the Council and its committees, but the Football Association should recognise that experience in playing, coaching, managing, refereeing, is also a valuable and proper qualification for membership of these. I believe it would benefit the game a great deal if the Association took urgent steps to bring additional members on to its Council and committees, say 8 or 10 altogether, who had substantial experience in these fields. They would be in the nature of independent rather than representative members, and in these circumstances the Association could itself appoint them, in consultation with other interests in the game.

W. J. SLATER.

CHAPTER VII. FINANCE—FOOTBALL POOLS LEVY

478. We would recommend that the Levy on the gross Pools proceeds should be at the rate of 2 per cent and not 1 per cent (as recommended by the majority of the Committee in chapter VII, paragraph 464). We would regard the suggested 1 per cent (producing about £1 million per annum) as quite inadequate to meet the needs of the Game at any rate in the foreseeable future (say the next 10 years). Indeed, we are not at all sure that even 2 per cent will be enough.

479. Our main reasons for taking this view can be briefly summarised as follows:—

- (i) The scope and importance of Football—far and away Britain's greatest spectator and participant sport—make it unique among sporting and recreational activities. It needs and deserves special treatment.
- (ii) The needs of the Amateur Game at the grass roots for facilities are very great and will require substantial sums over a number of years (this applies even more strongly to Scotland and Wales than to England). We would emphasise we are not talking about elaborate premises or expensive equipment but about the provision of simple basic amenities—

and, where needed, more and better pitches. We believe that many potential players are put off the Game by the primitive conditions under which they would have to play it. In our opinion the Game has a considerable growth potential which will not be achieved without a big improvement in facilities. Money is also needed for coaching and training.

- (iii) The Levy Board should have a vital part to play in promoting the development of multi-sports centres. These could play a really worthwhile role in the lives and activities of very large numbers of people of all types and from all walks of life in our great cities and regional centres. Their organisation should result in fruitful partnership between the Board, the Local Authority and the local population. While we do not think that the whole of the very considerable capital for such ventures should be provided by the Board, there is no doubt that substantial sums ought to be available to the Board if it is to operate effectively as a stimulator of and catalyst in these schemes.
- (iv) The Board ought also to be equipped to play its proper part in assisting the professional Game—on the capital expenditure side—by loans and perhaps in very exceptional cases grants—particularly for such projects as super stadia. Even a modest role will in this sphere require a good deal of money.
- (v) To function effectively the Board must be able to attract people of the right calibre. This it will not do, unless they are given the resources to do the job properly.
- (vi) We regard even the £2 million suggested as a modest amount: particularly when it is compared with the sums devoted (rightly in our view) to the Arts and Horse Racing. It has the added advantage that a substantial part of it will not be a burden on public funds.

FINALLY

480. We are strongly in favour of a Levy Board. We are convinced that it can be a potent instrument for increasing the health and happiness of very large numbers of our people. The concept is bold and imaginative: we believe that the Government should and will match the Board's resources to the creative opportunities which will result from its establishment. A million pounds a year will not achieve this.

LEWIS HAWSER.
MAGNUS WILLIAMSON.

APPENDIX

ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS FROM WHOM EVIDENCE WAS RECEIVED

England:

- † Amateur Football Alliance
- * Association of Education Committees
- *† Mr. B. R. Baker, J.P., Chairman, Referees' Committee, Essex County Football Association
- *† British Broadcasting Corporation
- † British Olympic Association
- *† Central Council of Physical Recreation
- † Mr. U. Aylmer Coates, C.B.E., B.Arch., F.R.B.A., P.P.T.P.I., County Planning Officer, Lancashire County Council
- *† Conference of the English Senior Schools' Football Associations
- † Mr. G. R. Davis, Hon. General Secretary, North Berkshire Football Competitions
- † Mr. T. V. S. Durrant, County Planning Officer, Surrey County Council
- *† English Schools' Football Association
- *† Football Association
- *† Football League
- *† Football League Secretaries and Managers Association
- * Football Writers' Association
- † Dr. J. A. Harrington, Research Director, Birmingham Research Group
- *† Horserace Betting Levy Board
- * Incorporated Association of Headmasters
- * Independent Television Authority
- * Isthmian Football League
- *† Mr. S. W. Jacobs, Secretary, Oxfordshire Football Association
- *† Mr. E. Kangley, Secretary, Sheffield and Hallamshire Football Association
- * Mr. P. F. McCormack, Parks Superintendent, Liverpool City Council
- * Mr. J. McGeachin, Liverpool Boys' Association
- *† Mr. D. D. Molyneux, Deputy Director, Sports Council
- *† National Federation of Football Supporters' Clubs
- † National Playing Fields Association
- * National Association of Bookmakers Ltd.
- * Mr. L. B. Norris, Adviser for Physical Education, Liverpool City Council
- * Northern Football League
- *† Pay T.V. Ltd.
- *† Political and Economic Planning
- *† Pool Promoters Association
- *† Professional Footballers' Association
- *† Referees' Association
- *† Mr. Geoffrey Richards, Secretary, The Eastern Sports Council

† Written Evidence

* Oral Evidence

*Sir Stanley Rous, C.B.E., President, Fédération Internationale De Football Association

*Mr. S. A. Rudd, Secretary of the Liverpool County Football Association

†Southend United Football Club

†Mr. C. A. L. Stevens, Director, Bristol Rovers Football Club

†University of London Association Football Club

†Viewsport Ltd.

*†Mr. W. Winterbottom, O.B.E., Director, Sports Council; General Secretary, Central Council of Physical Recreation

*†Mr. A. W. Wade, Director of Coaching, Football Association

†Wigan Athletic Football Club

Scotland:

†Scottish Council of Physical Recreation

*†Scottish Football Association

*†Scottish Football League

*Scottish Football Writers' Association

*†Scottish Junior Football Association

*†Scottish Juvenile Football Association

*†Scottish Professional Footballers' Association

*†Scottish Secondary Juvenile Football Association

*†Scottish Schools' Football Association

Wales:

*†Football Association of Wales

*†Monmouthshire County Football Association

*†North Wales Coast Football Association

†South Wales Association Football Coaches Association

*†South Wales and Monmouthshire Football Association

*†Welsh Football League

*†Welsh Football League (Northern Section)

†Welsh National Football League Mid-Wales Section

*†Welsh Schools Football Association

*†West Wales Football Association

*†Mr. G. Edwards, Member of the Sports Council, Director of Cardiff City Football Club

† Written Evidence

* Oral Evidence